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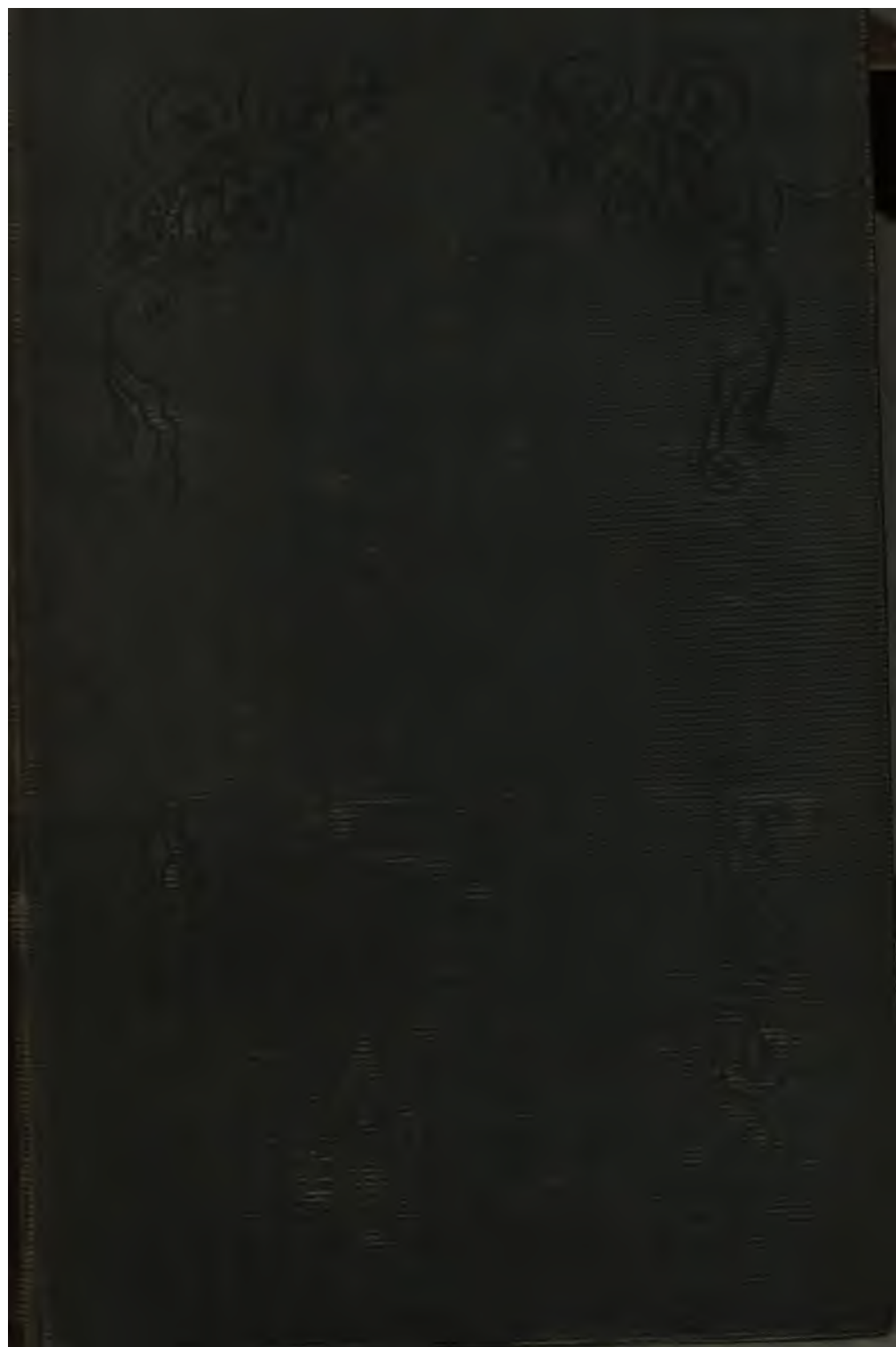
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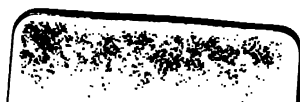
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THE MODERN LITERATURE

OF

FRANCE.

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OF
FRANCE.



BY GEORGE W. M. REYNOLDS,
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P R E F A C E .

PREJUDICE, which a celebrated political writer very happily denominated “the spider of the mind,” has done much to depreciate the value of foreign systems and institutions in the minds of the English. Hence is it that we daily hear even men of most liberal opinions expressing sentiments anything but impartial and just in reference to the French. This is the more to be regretted, inasmuch as it is only by comparison, emulation, and research, that we can perfect or improve any system of laws, morals, literature, science, or arts. But when we find the leading journals and periodicals of the English press still leaguings together against the French, with

all the bitterness and hate which characterized the sentiments of the nation in those times when Napoleon rolled his war-chariot from the gates of Madrid to the palace of the Kremlin, and when our armies and household troops were called forth to protect the coasts against the menaced invasion of the imperial hero,—we feel our regret at such injustice commingled with a sentiment of pity, or indeed of contempt, for the narrow-mindedness of our fellow-countrymen.

The truth is, that the generality of English residents in France obtain but so superficial a view of the real position of the inhabitants, and are so apt to be led astray in their judgments by the prejudiced opinions of others, that a truly impartial examination into the literature, jurisprudence, social condition, and commercial relations of one of the first nations in Europe, has been seldom accomplished, even if attempted. It is not by a three months' residence in Paris, a visit of a few days to the vineyards of Bordeaux, Bourgogne, Epernay, &c., or a sojourn of a week in two or three of the great manufacturing towns, that an observer, however persevering and intelligent he may be, can obtain so great an insight into the Institutions he is desirous of understanding as to enable him to

describe them with accuracy, or in a manner sufficiently minute and elaborate as to render his elucidations really useful and authoritative. We have carefully perused the various works lately written upon this important subject; and we are sorry to have noticed that their principal contents have originated in the most deplorable ignorance, the worst feeling of spite and malignity, or an extraordinary facility of misapprehension and mistake. But the fact is, that the art of book-making has arrived to such a state in this country, that a trip from London to Boulogne engenders its two octavo volumes; and a little sojourn of a month in Paris creates an infliction of a thousand pages upon the reading public. Works are therefore concocted in a hurry, and without any regard to reality and truth. Indeed, we have generally observed that those publications have been most popular, which have lavished the greatest quantity of abuse upon the foreign people or institutions they pretend to treat of.

But the most desperate attack ever made upon a foreign nation by the pen, was that which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* about three years ago. This assault on the literature and morals of the French was disgraceful in the extreme; and as

we fondly hope that our sketch of modern French authors will remove many of the prejudices existing against them in the minds of Englishmen, we shall content ourselves in the present instance with making a few observations relative to that part of the article in the *Quarterly* which attacks the moral character of the French.

In the article alluded to, the origin of political revolution in France is attributed to the depraved taste of the nation with regard to literature, a proposition no less ridiculous than unfounded. To suppose that the insurrection of 1830,—an insurrection having for its object the working of a great and glorious change in the liberties of a mighty people,—depended on the licentiousness of novels and dramas, is to believe that the heated imaginations of men were fired rather by the contents of a circulating library than influenced by a just sense of wrong and oppression. That certain political pamphlets or articles in liberal journals may more or less guide the public mind, and teach the indolent and careless to think for themselves, is certain; but that works abounding with voluptuousness and licentiousness can produce the same results, is a speculation as palpably false, as it is adventurously put forward. We shall moreover show in the

course of this work that the generality of French novels are anything but licentious and abandoned.

It is really lamentable to see men, for the purpose of pandering to their own prejudices, thus sacrificing truth and honesty, as if literary integrity ought not to be as strictly preserved as any other species of honour. But, unfortunately, many of our countrymen, during a short sojourn in France, receive a variety of false impressions, and, on their return to England, imagine themselves capable of criticising and dissecting foreign institutions, customs, habits, morals, literature, and jurisprudence, whereas their knowledge of those matters is really too trivial even to allow them to discuss the subjects in common conversation. Of this an editor of the *Atlas* gave us a specimen about three years ago; when, in a long article intended to be a notice of the "Revue des deux Mondes," and the "Revue de Paris," he coolly tells us that the French have no other literary periodical journals of any consequence, that their reviews of new books are always scanty and short, and that they pay but little attention to criticisms on recent publications. All this is entirely false. The Parisian press boasts of the "Chronique de Paris," the "Voleur," and the "Cabinet de Lecture," each of which is as large as the *Athenæum*,

each appears *six times a month*, and each invariably contains critical notices as elaborate as those of the English parallel papers. In addition to these, there are the "Revue des deux Mondes," the "Revue de Paris," "La France Littéraire," and "Le Panorama de Londres," (which are published every fortnight, and consist of from 100 to 150 closely-printed octavo pages each), the "Revue du Nord," the "Revue Britannique," and a variety of other magazines (published monthly), of the same size as their English contemporaries. All these periodicals are more or less devoted to literary criticism; besides which, the French daily political newspapers (to the number of upwards of thirty) all contain *feuilletons* where new works are reviewed.

But to return to the *Quarterly Review*. Because we read in French Novels of intrigues, adulteries, and murders, do they exist the more in France than in England on that account? Or does the critic in the *Quarterly* mean to argue that every *wife* is unfaithful to the marriage-bed in France, that every *husband* revenges his wrongs, and that *every lover* kills himself in despair? Are English women always pure? is vengeance unknown in Britain? and is *suicide* merely a name amongst our immaculate countrymen? No—we never take up a paper with-

out reading a case of *crim. con.*; we see, alas! too often, terrible instances of the most deadly vengeance; and occurrences of suicide have lately been so frequent in England, that the very police-magistrates have assumed to themselves the right of punishing those who are detected and saved in an attempt at self-destruction. Yet the author of the article we are examining adduces a long list of cases where individuals in France have committed suicide on account of remorse, disappointed love, or even a trivial stroke of adversity, to prove that the immorality of the French is not confined to a few depraved beings, but that it is partaken of and shared amongst thirty-four millions of souls, without a single exception, they being all *one family* in vice.

Perhaps the critic whose deplorable misrepresentations we have taken some pains to correct, is not aware that the average amount of crime in England preponderates over that in France; and that there are more murders, more robberies, more infanticides, and more unnatural crimes registered in the annals of turpitude and delinquency in the former than in the latter country. An appeal to the "Newgate Calendar," and to a collection of the "Gazette des Tribunaux," will bear us out in our assertion.

The abuser of French morals then proceeds to

favour us with some extracts from the said "Gazette des Tribunaux," relative to several horrible trials that had lately taken place in France. Amongst the hundreds which occur annually in that as well as in any other country, it is very easy to select half a dozen of the most dreadful, "in order to prove that the principles which pervade the novels appear to exhibit themselves elsewhere." In answer to this we declare that the same principles exhibit themselves also in England; particularly when Mrs. Brownrigg flogged her apprentices to death, and when Cooke at Leicester murdered Mr. Paas with a log of wood, *and then burnt the body piecemeal on the fire to get rid of all traces that might lead to his discovery.* The late murder of Mrs. Brown by Greenacre was not attended with any dreadful circumstances, we suppose. Or may we say nothing to the massacre of Millie in the Newcastle Savings' Bank? O! no! —in England murders are always committed *mercifully* and *humanely*, according to the inferences we naturally draw from the remarks of the critic in the *Quarterly*; whereas in France they are invariably attended with unusual circumstances of horror. To support this assertion he adduces the case of Dellacollonge, "who cut the body into pieces for the purpose of more easily disposing of it in ponds and

ditches." Our worthy critic forgets the almost parallel conduct (above-mentioned) of Cooke, *who cut the body into pieces to burn it*; nor could he possibly foresee the monstrous deeds of Greenacre, or of the women who daily murder their illegitimate children.

The verdict in Dellacollonge's case was as follows : — "As to the murder, the culprit is guilty of voluntary homicide, but without premeditation; and as to the robbery, he is guilty, but with extenuating circumstances."

Upon which the writer in the *Quarterly* says, "*Without premeditation!* He had concealed the girl for some days in his house, till he could find an occasion of making away with her. And the *extenuating circumstances* were, that to the robbery was superadded *sacrilege*, and that sacrilegious robbery was committed to enable a murderer to make his escape."

Now this is false and misrepresented; Dellacollonge did not even mean to murder the girl when he put his hand to her throat with severity, to give her an idea of the preliminary feelings of strangulation. A reference to the French journals of February, 1836, will establish the truth of this assertion.

The misrepresentation is about the words "extenuating circumstances." In England life is often wasted for trivial crimes; in France it is always spared, that the culprit may have time to repent, when mercy can possibly be thus extended; and it was only a merciful and humane feeling that caused the addition of the words "extenuating circumstances" to be made to the jury's verdict; an addition that, without compromising their sincerity, did honour to their hearts.

The palpable object of the article under notice, and as the author himself *almost* confesses, is to show that "the July revolution has worked a great and sudden change" in the morality of the French. He says it has "emancipated the women from all *etiquette* and reserve; that is, in one word, *modesty!*" This is false and absurd—so absurd, indeed, that we are astonished to meet with so palpable a folly in the *Quarterly Review*. A child could not be made to believe that the insurrection of a mighty people to displace a tyrant, and to elevate another dynasty to the throne, could produce such baneful effects. A monarchical change cannot so essentially affect private morals. The predilections and passions of individuals are not subject to variation on account

of the secession or expulsion of one dynasty and the succession of another. An extension of political liberty does not implicate a *decrease* of moral rectitude and social order; it rather encourages an *increase*. The example of a superstitious and encroaching despot could not benefit the morals of the French; but the example of a good husband, a good father, a good Christian, and a man who was a good son, certainly must be a beneficial one for the country.

But enough of the *Quarterly Review* and its illiberal abuse. Let us conclude this Preface with a short synopsis of the plan of the work to which it is annexed.

The volumes now offered to the public contain elaborate notices upon the most celebrated living French authors, with numerous and extensive extracts translated from their works, as specimens of their style, and with a view of rendering the reviews as interesting as possible. In a few instances expunged translations are given; but for the most part the extracts are rendered as literally as was consistent with sense and idiom. Upon this plan, it is therefore hoped that the task of perusal

will be a pleasurable as well as an instructive one ;
and the reader will be enabled to form an unbiassed
opinion of his own, in addition to that which we
humbly submit to him.

INTRODUCTION.

THE literature of France since the Revolution of 1830, is quite distinct from that under the fallen dynasty. A sudden impulse was given to the minds of men by the successful struggle for freedom which hurled the imprudent Charles from his regal seat; and all aims—all views—and all interests underwent a vast and important change. Ages of progressive but peaceful reform could not have accomplished so much, in reference to the opinions and tastes of a mighty nation, as those three days of revolution and civil war. The march of civilization was hurried over centuries; and as if France had suddenly leapt from an old into a new epoch, with-

out passing through the minutes, the hours, and the days which mark the lapse of time, she divested herself of her grotesque and gothic apparel, and assumed an attire which at first astonished and awed herself. And then men began to congratulate each other upon this change of garb ; and now that they are accustomed to see and admire it, they look upon their rejected garments as characteristics of antiquity, and not as things that were in vogue only a few years since.

Thus regenerated, and suddenly raised from a state of slavery to a position of comparative freedom, the people felt their ideas expand ; and they imparted to their writings that spirit which fired their souls. Their intelligence increased in magnitude—their understandings were enlarged—and they embodied in their fictions, as well as in their histories, the substance of the new ideas they had so unexpectedly and so abruptly acquired. There is an essential difference between writing in a barred cell, and in a state of freedom : the effusions produced in the one, savour of the monotony of the place where they were originated ; but the songs of the latter are replete with joyousness and glee. The note of the caged bird may not be compared with the blithe chirrup of the feathered chorister in his native

wood. And thus it was with the French. When they were afraid to suffer their sportive imaginations to draw the true character of a tyrannical monarch even in their fictions, their pens, invested with the chains of slavery, passed heavily and slowly over the paper, to which every word that was committed was obliged to be duly weighed; but so soon as those chains were struck off, the author gave full scope to the soarings of his fancy, and the face of the literature of the country became changed.

When an individual has suffered a long imprisonment under the most oppressive and irksome circumstances, it is not to be wondered at if his sudden restoration to liberty should lead him to commit a thousand follies, and indulge in a variety of extravagances, to give full scope to his joy. Thus was the imagination of the French for a time betrayed into a hundred wild frolics, and led into a number of absurdities, when it was so suddenly emancipated from its confinement. Had this change taken place through the medium of gradient indulgences and progressive reforms, the case would have been different; and the march of intellect would have kept pace with the course of political emendation. But France was determined to divest itself of the old leaven, and speculate on a new state of things; and

rapid and abrupt as was the step she took from one boundary to the other on the road of civilization, equally fleet and fast was imagination bound to travel to keep pace with its twin-sister, intelligence.

To a people, who, like the English, prefer the gradual adoption of measures which may eventually secure the full enjoyment of a certain degree of freedom, these sudden changes must have appeared ruinous and alarming. But the French maintain that the march of civilization can only be accelerated by the march of liberty; and that no measure can be too sudden nor too precipitate, which will ensure an advance towards the desired end.

It is however a matter of speculation whether the Reform Act would have been even now conceded to the people of this country, if it had not been found necessary to keep pace as much as possible with the giant strides made by the French. Certainly a change has taken place in the literature of England since the passing of the Reform Bill, as well as in that of France since the three days of July. But of course the amount of these changes was duly proportionate to the extent of the cause; and thus is the latter so much more apparent and striking than the former. A degree of liberality has been infused into English works during the last

six years, which was never so perceptible before: the numbers of liberal papers have considerably increased; and no one can deny the fact that, on the average, these journals enjoy a much larger circulation than those which profess more circumscribed opinions. This circumstance plainly indicates the true feeling of the nation, and materially tends to corroborate our assertion.

The literature of France, previous to the Revolution of 1830, resembled that of England at the present day; inasmuch as moral lessons were taught through the medium of almost impossible fictions. Now the French author paints the truth in all its nudity; and this development of the secrets of Nature shocks the English reader, because he is not as yet accustomed to so novel a style. To depict truth, in all its bearings, consistently with nature, is a difficult task; and he who attempts it must occasionally exhibit deformities which disgust the timid mind. A glance at life, in all its phases, cannot be attended with very satisfactory results; and while the age surveys much to please, it must also be prepared to view much that will be abhorrent to the virtuous imagination. The strict conventional usages of English society prevent the introduction of highly-coloured pictures into works of fiction;

and thus, in an English book which professes to be a history of man or of the world, the narrative is but half told. In France the whole tale is given at once; and the young men, and young females do not there enter upon life with minds so circumscribed and narrow that the work of initiation becomes an expensive or ruinous task. We do not become robbers because we read of thefts; nor does a female prove incontinent on account of her knowledge that such a failing exists. The pilot should be made aware of rocks and quicksands, that he may know how to avoid them: it is ridiculous to suffer him to roam on a vast ocean without having previously consulted the maps and charts which can alone warn him of peril. Such is the reasoning of French writers, who moreover carry their system to such an extent, that they do not hesitate to represent vice triumphant, and virtue levelled with the dust; for they assert that the former invariably prospers, and the other languishes without support; whereas the English author points to a different moral in his fiction.

It is much better, says the French writer, to prepare a youth for that life in which he is about to be embarked, by a bold and naked display of the truth, than to expose him to all the bitterness of

disappointment and to a conviction that may probably come too late, by enforcing doctrines which teach the necessity of looking at the world as a stage where the upright man is exalted and the immoral one debased.

The above observations principally apply to the nature and construction of French tales. A very prevalent idea amongst the English, however, is that the novels of French authors for the most part contain passages of too highly-coloured a description or of downright indecency. This is certainly the case with a few works of interest that have appeared since the Revolution; but it is by no means a general rule. Paul de Kock, Auguste Ricard, and some others of the same school, have originated this accusation on the part of foreigners against the morality of French writings; but indecency is far from being the common characteristic of French novels; and the impression in English minds arose from the fact that the works of Paul de Kock, and his imitators, being the most popular, are those more generally recommended at first to the subscriber to a news-room or circulating-library. They are moreover the easiest writings for the English student to comprehend; and thus arose and was encouraged an idea which is anything but well-founded.

In laying before the reader these concise, but very necessary suggestions, we have alluded only to the literature of France since the Revolution of 1830; and therefore have not had occasion to make any allusion to the publications of Le Sage, Louvet-Couvet, or Pigault Lebrun, which cannot be said to be more immoral or indecent than the works of Smollett or Fielding.

THE
MODERN LITERATURE
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CHAPTER I.

GEORGES SAND.

THE reader, the least versed in the modern literature of France, must be perfectly aware that the name which stands at the head of this chapter is but a pseudonym of the Baroness Dudevant, one of the most successful authoresses that ever presented her effusions to the public. So great is her literary reputation, that even the names of Madame de Genlis and de Staël are cast into shade by the supernal lustre which attends upon her renown. Formed and fashioned by the study of those great events which during three days of warfare operated so strangely upon the destinies of her native land, the mind of this astonishing writer suddenly resolved upon creating its own revolution, and introducing a number of important changes into the sphere of domestic society, as her

fellow countrymen had done in that of politics. She felt herself seized with an ardour that thirsted not for the every day reputation acquired by successful writers, but for a fame the brightness of which should dazzle all who came within its scope. To please with her tales was the least of the many aims which she sought when she took up the pen of an author: her purpose was to astonish and strike mankind at once with the boldness and novelty of her speculations and opinions. Fully understanding the extent of her own powers, and well able to appreciate her own abilities, she was an hermaphrodite of intelligence, combining in her soul the masculine ideas and spirit of the lords of the creation with the delicacy and softness of her own sex.

The Revolution of July made the Baroness Du-devant a writer. A little more than eight years ago she began to contemplate that terrible ebullition of an outraged people's feelings; and in studying the spirit of the heroes of the barricades, she imperceptibly inhaled the generous fervour of enthusiasm herself. Her mind expanded as she contemplated the progressive march of liberty; and she determined that the course of intelligence should move at an equal pace and in a parallel line. Her ideas were thus formed by a great political event which could

not fail to render the writings of its disciple striking and peculiar. Had she been a man in sex, as well as in the name she assumed, she would have most probably taken a loftier flight than Lamennais or Carrel themselves. As it is, she is a political writer of no mean ability; and her arguments, in that sphere, are as terse and as formidable as her ethics are adventurous and bold.

Madame Dudevant is a lady under thirty years of age, beautiful in person as she is elegant in mind, and calculated as much to grace a gilded *salon* as to shine in a *conversazione* amongst a number of eminent *litterati*. She is witty and *spirituelle* as well as philosophic and profound, and as capable of exciting peals of laughter as of drawing the tear of tender sympathy from the eyes. Her style of conversation is not vested with the same boldness and fearlessness which characterise her writings; her ideas are invariably expressed with a reserve and modesty which cannot be traced in her volumes. She has seen much of the world, and has suffered much: hence, the elevated range of her sentiments bespeaks a greatness of soul, an independence of opinion, a capability of thought, and an indifference to the shackles of public prejudice, which even few men have ever displayed. And yet she does not always judge of the

world as she has found it; for, when fatigued with extolling the character of Woman, she has drawn a noble and undying picture of Man, which every one who has perused *Jacques* and *Simon* cannot fail to admire.

The first novel that Madame Dudevant issued to the world, was *Rose et Blanche*. This strange book, in which the struggle that took place between female delicacy and masculine fortitude in the bosom of its author is everywhere apparent, created so extraordinary a sensation in the literary sphere of France, that public curiosity was never more acute till the period when it was satisfactorily ascertained that the compiler of so singular a narrative was in reality a woman. At one page the reader is struck with the audacity of the opinions displayed in no varnished style before him; at another he is convinced that none but a female pencil could have traced colours so soft and delicate. The work is an anatomical analysis of the mind of woman—that mind whose trammels so few have read before, but which she has read so well. Every fibre is dissected, scrutinized, tested, and examined: every vein—every nerve is laid bare: in all its nudity is that mind unfolded to the curious observer. *Rose et Blanche* is a book which may be compared to a vast reservoir,

into which pour two streams, the one boisterous and foaming; the other placid and smooth;—the one covered with the wrecks of vessels; the other bearing flowers upon its surface;—the one emanating from a mighty torrent in a horrid rock; the other rising from a gentle spring in some fair mead;—the one, in fine, all impetuosity, storm, and billow; the other resembling the rivulet which flows through an Oriental garden. And that reservoir is thus composed of waters whose principles are so opposite, and whose freightage differ even as life and death. That reservoir is one of a variety of passions and feelings, all strangely amalgamating together, but derived from sources so discrepant. Such is the romance of *Rose et Blanche*; and the same observations more or less apply to all the writings of this great author.

Simon is decidedly the most perfect novel in the French language. The character of its heroine, Fiamma, is delineated with a force and energy which speak to the feelings and comprehension of the reader like the truths of a painting or of a statue. *Jacques* is a noble eulogy of man: it is a striking and affecting description of the sacrifice which a magnanimous mind is capable of making to the felicity of others. *Indiana* and *Valentine* are minute studies of the mind of woman; what woman would be, and

not what she is ; teaching a strange moral, and yet so full of gracefulness of expression, delicate touches appealing to the very soul, and simplicity of description, that the reader is hurried on by a witchery and a charm whose real powers and influence he does not perceive until he has brought to a conclusion the strange volumes the magic of which is so potent.

The most ingenious plot ever interwoven in a tale, is to be found in the *Sécrétaire Intime*. The delicious but virtuous Cavalcanti, the heroine of this legend, is a powerful creation of the mind ; and were her character more fully developed and worked out—that is to say, had the tale been longer—we doubt not but that this creature of the fancy would have taken the first rank in point of interest amongst the heroines of Georges Sand. *Lelia* is the most celebrated, because it is the most pernicious, of the category of volumes the title pages of which bear the immortal name of this extraordinary writer. The tale is however devoid of one single feature to recommend it : it is a hellish compound of poisonous drugs combined together for the purpose of forming a draught which may instil a slow poison into the veins of those who luxuriate in it. *André*, *Metella*, and *La Marquise* are strange episodes in the history of human nature.

But it is to *Rose et Blanche*, *Indiana*, and *Valentine* that Georges Sand owes her great reputation. It is in those works that she displays the vast and inexhaustible powers of her masculine mind; it is there that she evinces the wonderful talents which place her name first upon the list of authors who have sprung from the womb of the Revolution. The chasm, which involved in destruction the throne of the royal Charles, gave birth to a writer whose performances astonished those who had seen too much to be astonished at a little; and the day which gave France a new dynasty, presented her also with a new chieftain in the democracy of letters. Not the least extraordinary feature in the literary history of this strange female philosopher, is the vast versatility of her talent,—that talent which as easily knocks down and builds up systems of morals, as the heroes of July deposed one monarch and exalted another,—a talent which at one moment astonishes by its magnitude, and in the next fascinates with its simplicity and original *naïveté*,—a talent, in fine, that triumphed over received opinions and established new ones at will.

That Georges Sand lived much in Italy, and became during her sojourn intimately acquainted with the manners and peculiarities of the voluptuous inhabitants of that sunny clime, is evidenced by *Simon*,

Metella, etc.; and that she has borrowed much of her impassioned warmth of style from the literature of the Italians, as well as necessarily imbibing a portion of it in the course of her residence amongst them, is also a fair conclusion. Her genius and imagination are tinged with the rich colours and gorgeous dyes which characterise those of the children of the south; and to an extensive acquaintance with the political situation and opinions of the Italians, as well as to a study and contemplation of the events that took place in her own country when she first became an author, may be attributed the liberality of sentiment which she carries to so great an extent. Madame Dudevant is a republican in the *sans culotte* sense of the word; and the *Revue des Deux Mondes* has already been enriched by many papers from her powerful pen.

In reference to her pecuniary situation, it will be sufficient to observe that Madame Dudevant is a constant contributor to many of the leading French Magazines. Her price is a thousand francs (40*l.* sterling) for an article of sixteen pages. With regard to her novels, she has been paid liberal amounts for some; and for others she has made private arrangements with her publishers, according to which she is remunerated at the rate of two francs a volume for

all copies that are disposed of. She usually writes in two volumes—the present standard fashion in France, as the three-volume novels are the mode in England—and a first edition of a new work by her consists of four thousand copies; thus producing her a clear profit of sixteen thousand francs (640*l.* sterling). But many of her books have run through three or four editions, and have materially increased the profits accruing to her labours.

This woman of a million passions, when she first entered upon the marriage state with the nobleman whose name she bears, found that the endearments of her domestic circle were few; and her's was a disposition, which, feeling a perpetual want of something to love and cherish with a pure and unvarying affection, was easily led astray so soon as those ties of attachment were, as it is reported—but how truly, we know not—wantonly broken by him who ought to have been proud of the woman whose incipient genius he could not but have perceived. Hence—in an age and a city of pleasure and temptation—exposed to all those dangers which are ever to be encountered by beauty and talent—and gifted with a soul as full of poesy and love as her imagination was of richness and originality, did the baroness yield to the exigencies of her nature and of her

position, and seek that consolation with another which she could not find in him who was her legal protector. She became an authoress in due time; and aware that prejudice might attach unpopularity to her writings, if issued under the auspices of her real name, she adopted that of Georges Sand, and, as we before stated, experienced the most complete success ever attained by any female in modern times.

But now, faithful to our projected plan, let us lay before the reader a specimen of the effusions of that transcendent genius which we have so highly lauded. We would willingly select this specimen from one of her most popular works; but we see no incident sufficiently isolated in them to warrant the transfer to our pages without damage to its interest. We must therefore have recourse to one of her minor tales for our purpose; and in selecting *Metella* as our specimen, must preface the extract by informing our readers that Lady Metella Mowbray, an Englishwoman, is the mistress of Oliver, a native of Geneva, in the neighbourhood of which city they reside. Metella is much older than her admirer, and is not unacquainted with the fact that her beauty is upon the wane. Her duty to an orphan niece has imposed upon her the task of bringing up that beautiful scion of a deceased portion of her family; and as the reader may

easily suppose, upon this circumstance hinges the principal interest of the concluding portion of the tale, which we have translated as follows.

THE SACRIFICE.

"What were you doing here at this hour, Sarah?" inquired Lady Mowbray.

"I was going to your room, aunt," replied Sarah, without the slightest hesitation.

"Come, then, my dear child," said Lady Mowbray, affectionately taking Sarah's arm.

They hastened to Metella's apartment without exchanging another word. The calmness and silence of the night were only broken by the joyous song of the nightingale; and that delicious harmony contrasted strangely with the profound affliction in which those two females were at that moment absorbed.

Metella shut the door of her chamber, and led her niece forth upon the balcony. There she seated herself upon a chair, and desired Sarah to occupy the ottoman at her feet. The beautiful girl obeyed; and the aunt drew her head upon her knees, and took the hands of the fair girl in her own, which Sarah covered with kisses and with tears.

"O my dear aunt—pardon me—I am greatly to blame!"

"No, Sarah—you are not deserving of reproach, save in one instance—and that is for not having made a confidant of me. Your reserve has caused all this evil, my dear child: now, speak to me with frankness—tell me every thing."

Lady Mowbray uttered these words in a mortal agony; and, as she waited for her niece's reply, she felt her forehead suffused with a cold perspiration.

Had Sarah, then, discovered the nature of the terms on which Oliver resided with her aunt? Metella was unaware what reason could have induced Sarah suddenly to lay aside a hope so long nourished in secret; and she shuddered as she feared that her niece's lips were about to give vent to the reproaches she so well merited. A dreadful weight was taken off her mind when Sarah thus replied to her with assurance and firmness.

"Yes, dear aunt, I will tell you all. But wherefore have I not ere now confided my silly thoughts to your bosom? O had I done so, you would have prevented me from becoming a prey to them—for you know full well that Oliver, your adopted son, can never marry me!"

"Sarah—my dear child—wherefore do you fancy that Oliver cannot espouse her whom he shall prefer?" demanded Metella.

"This morning," replied Sarah, "we were speaking on indifferent matters as we walked together in the park; and as we came near the barred-gate which opens into the road, we saw a bridal procession pass by. I noticed that the countenances of the principal actors in the ceremony wore an aspect of timidity and restraint.—'How unhappy they seem to be!' exclaimed Oliver. 'What a miserable thing is a bridal!'—'You would not have people marry in secret, would you?' said I. 'That would be far more miserable still.'—'I wish that people were not obliged to marry at all,' was his abrupt reply. 'I detest the useless ceremony, and will never marry!'—O my dear aunt, those words went as a dagger to my heart; at the same time they appeared so extraordinary, that I had the boldness to observe, in an affected tone of pleasantry, 'You scarcely know yourself what you would do in that respect.'—He looked at me with a strange degree of earnestness which I could not understand: but it appeared as if he meant to say—'Be well convinced of the truth of what I tell you: I have taken an oath to the Almighty—and I will keep it.' Shame and grief rendered me silent; and it was in vain, throughout the day, that I endeavoured to conceal my despair."

Sarah was absorbed in tears; and Metella, reliev-

ed of a terrible state of suspense, was for some minutes insensible to the sorrows of her niece. "Oliver did not love Sarah! It was in vain that she loved him—in vain that she was young—in vain that she was beautiful and rich: Oliver desired no other affection than that of Lady Mowbray!" For one moment overcome by these reflections, Metella selfishly indulged in a species of triumph over the unhappy girl at her feet, and suffered the luckless Sarah to weep plentifully. But this cruelty was only of an instant's duration: the passion of Lady Mowbray for Oliver existed in a mind capable of experiencing all those tender sentiments which form such splendid embellishments to the female sex. She loved Sarah almost as much as she doted upon Oliver—but loved her as a mother loves her daughter. The sight of that fair creature's sorrow lacerated the heart of Metella: she had a thousand things with which to reproach herself; she ought to have perceived from the first the consequences that might ensue from the continued intimacy between the two young people. Already had the neighbours hinted to her the impropriety of such conduct: she had disregarded the suggestion; and now the happiness of Sarah was compromised even more than her reputation.

Metella pressed her niece to her bosom with a

convulsive sob ; and in the first moments of her compassion and her tenderness, she meditated the sacrifice of her own love for Oliver to the felicity of Sarah.

"No," cried she, led astray by a sentiment of the most exalted generosity ; " Oliver has made no such desperate vow : he is free—he can marry you ! O let him love you—let him insure your happiness ; and I will bless you both ! It shall not be I who will oppose any obstacles to the union of the individuals who are dearer to me than any others in the world ! "

" O I believe you,—I believe you, my dear aunt," cried Sarah, throwing herself once more into Metella's arms : " but it is he who does not love me ! O what can I do ? "

" He did not tell you that he does not love you, Sarah ? Did he tell you so ? Speak ! "

" No—but he says that he is engaged ! O perhaps he is engaged in reality ! There is some reason, with which you are not acquainted—he loves another—haply he is married in secret ! "

" I will interrogate him—I will ascertain what the real state of his sentiments may be," answered Metella : " I will do for you every thing that lies in my power, dear girl—all that depends upon me ! If I

accomplish nothing in your behalf, *my* love at least will remain to you."

"O yes! my dear—dear aunt: that love is mine for ever!" ejaculated Sarah, casting herself at Metella's feet.

Calmed by the vague promises of her aunt, Sarah retired to her chamber. Lady Mowbray herself conducted her to her couch, and insisted upon her swallowing a soothing potion: she did not even quit her bed-side till the hapless girl ceased to sigh in her slumber, which resembled the repose of children who fall asleep in the midst of sobs, and awake with murmurs of distress.

Lady Mowbray did not sleep. She was reassured on certain points; but in reference to others, she was a prey to the most acute anxiety, especially as she saw no relief to the position in which she had placed her beloved Sarah. The idea of engaging Oliver to espouse her niece never attained to any degree of consistency in her mind: vainly might she have sacrificed that female jealousy which she combated so nobly during the past year! There are certain ties in life which become as sacred as if they were sanctioned by the laws: and Oliver would not have been able to prevent himself from remem-

bering that he had once looked upon Sarah as his daughter.

Incapable of extricating herself from this painful situation, Lady Mowbray resolved upon waiting a few days for the purpose of deciding on the best measures to adopt. She endeavoured to persuade herself that Sarah's passion was not altogether so serious as she, in her romantic confidence, had represented it to be; and she hoped that Oliver's coolness would prove a better method of cure than all the reasoning and argument in the world. On the following morning she sought an interview with Sarah, and assured her that she had maturely reflected upon the line of conduct she ought to pursue, but that it was impossible to interrogate Oliver relative to the meaning of his vows, without suffering him to be also informed of the impression they had made upon Miss Mowbray, and the importance that was attached to them.

"In the delicate position in which you are placed," said Lady Mowbray to her niece, "the first thing to be considered is the necessity of not suffering Oliver to know that you love him, before you are certain that he loves you."

"Decidedly, my dear aunt," said Sarah, blushing deeply.

"It is not necessary, my love," continued Metella, "that I should appeal to your modesty and your pride: both naturally suggest the propriety of maintaining the greatest command over yourself and all your actions."

"O certainly, dear aunt," replied the young English girl, with an admixture of pride and grief which gave her the appearance of a virgin-martyr.

"If Oliver—my adopted son"—added Metella, "be really under a vow of celibacy which he cannot break, you must separate, dear Sarah!"

"What!" exclaimed Sarah, in an agony of woe: "you will not drive me away? You cannot expel me from your presence? Must I, then, return to my convent—or to England? Afar from you—my dear aunt—Oh! afar from you, I should die, for I have been too sincerely loved!"

"No, my dearest Sarah," said Metella, in a low but impressive voice: "I am necessary to you—I will never abandon you;—we are linked together for life!"

And with these words she laid her two hands upon the head of her lovely niece, and raised her eyes to heaven with a solemn and sombre air. In consecrating herself to that child of her adoption, she felt all the responsibility of her self-imposed duties—espe-

cially as she would be haply compelled to sacrifice, in the discharge of her voluntarily vicarious task, the happiness of her remaining years—the society of Oliver !

“ You will at least promise me,” continued Metella, after a long pause, “ that, should I fail in accomplishing those ends which will secure your felicity, you yourself will essay to cure the wound now open in your breast ! Are you a silly romantic child, or a prudent and courageous girl ? ”

“ Do not mistrust me, dear aunt ! ”

“ No—I do not doubt your magnanimity of soul, Sarah. You are a Mowbray—you can suffer in silence. In your toilet, appear as particular as heretofore—and in your aspect, as calm as was your wont. We will yet wait a few days, before we hastily decide on our future proceedings. Swear to me, that you will not write to any of your friends—that I shall be your only confidant—your only counsel—and that you will endeavour to render yourself worthy of my tenderness.”

Sarah swore, amidst her tears, to do her aunt's bidding to the utmost of her power : but, in spite of all her efforts, her grief was only too visible ; and Oliver noticed it at once. He then scanned the countenance of Lady Mowbray, and found the same al-

teration in her features. The suspicions, which he had previously formed, now rushed to his mind with renewed force: he was alarmed at that which was passing within—he seized his fowling-piece, and hastened to amuse himself with an hour's sport in the neighbouring grove. When he had killed a few innocent birds, by way of distracting his own troubled mind from the sorrows on which he dared not ponder, he returned to the house, and found the two ladies more calm and tranquil. The evening passed quietly away; for, when two or three people have been in the habit of dwelling together so long that they reciprocally comprehend each other's ideas and sentiments, the charms of such joyous relation are not to be broken by a first assault. The following days consequently glided away in that intimacy and social familiarity, which none of the three had ever intentionally interrupted. The wound, nevertheless, enlarged in the breasts of all three. Oliver could no longer blind himself to the certainty of Sarah's love for him:—he had always rejected the idea up to that moment: but now everything on her part indicated her attachment—and every look of Metella only served to corroborate his opinion relative to the situation of her niece's heart. Oliver was in reality so fond of Lady Mowbray—he had experienced

in her society the charms of so sweet, so tranquil, and so peaceful a passion—that he had fancied himself incapable of entertaining a more ardent flame : he had therefore given himself up in all imagined security to the danger of having so angelic a being as Sarah for his adopted sister. In proportion as his sentiments with regard to Sarah became more lively, he succeeded in pacifying his own scrupulous conscience by the idea that Metella was still dear to him : and in this he did not deceive himself ;—only, that in the one instance love had usurped the place of friendship—and in the other, friendship the place of love. The soul of that young man was so ardent and yet so pure, that he did not know how to render an account of *himself* to *himself*.

But when he was convinced of the real position and sentiment of every heart, he did not attempt a compromise with his conscience : he resolved to depart ! The pensive sorrow of Sarah—her gentleness—her retiring modesty—her reserved tenderness—and noble pride, succeeded in filling him with rapture and enthusiasm. Open to impressions as he was, he perceived that he should not be long master of his secret ; and that which more than all conspired to hasten his departure was his consciousness of the fact that Metella had divined it !

And, in sooth, Lady Mowbray was too well acquainted with all the various shades of his character—all the motions of his countenance—not to have perceived, even before himself—he was so artless, that young Oliver!—the real state of his mind. This was the most fatal blow Metella had yet received: for she still loved him, in spite of her devotion to the cause of Sarah. Her manners with him had already assumed that dignity which time, the sanctifier of all affections, necessarily originates: but the heart of that unhappy woman was as young as the heart of Sarah. She became almost wild with uncertainty and grief. Should she allow her niece to tempt the dangers of a passion that was full well reciprocated? Ought she to accelerate a marriage which appeared to her to be at variance with propriety and taste? And yet, how could she oppose herself to that union, if Oliver and Sarah both desired it?

It was nevertheless necessary to enter upon explanations, to extricate them all from these perplexities, and to interrogate Oliver in reference to his real intentions. But in what capacity was she to effect these desirable aims? Was it as the despairing mistress of Oliver, or as the prudent aunt of Sarah, that she was to commence her operations?

One evening Oliver spoke of a visit of a few days which he was about to pay to some friends at Lyons. Lady Mowbray, in the desperate position to which she was reduced, received this news with joy, as a respite to her sufferings. On the following morning, Oliver ordered a horse to be saddled to convey him to Geneva, whence he intended to hire a post-chaise to Lyons. He proceeded to the drawing-room to take leave of the ladies; and Sarah, whose hand he now kissed for the first time in his life, was so troubled that she dared not raise her eyes towards his countenance. Metella, on the contrary, watched him attentively: he was exceedingly pale and calm—like a man who courageously accomplishes a terrible duty. He kissed Lady Mowbray, and then his force seemed to abandon him—the tears fell from his eyes—and his hand trembled convulsively, as he slipped a note into that of his mistress.

He precipitately left the apartment, mounted his horse, and departed at full gallop. Metella remained upon the threshold until not even the echo wafted the sounds of the retreating horse's hoofs to her ears. And then she placed one hand upon her heart—and she crushed the letter in the other—and she felt that all for her was over in this world!

She returned to the drawing-room. Sarah, who

was leaning over her embroidery, pretended to work in order to prove to her aunt that she was courageous and knew how to keep her promise: but she was as pale as Metella, and no longer felt the pulsations of her heart.

Lady Mowbray traversed the apartment without speaking to her niece. She hastened to her own chamber, and perused Oliver's note. It was as follows:

"I depart. You will never see me more: at all events, not till many years shall have elapsed, and when Miss Mowbray shall be married!

"Do not ask me wherefore. I leave you.—If you know why—never breathe a syllable to a soul!"

Metella thought that she was about to die: but she then felt how great is the force of nature in its resistance against grief. She could not weep—she was suffocated—she felt inclined to dash her head against the walls of her apartment. And then she thought of Sarah—and she experienced a transitory feeling—violent as evanescent—of hatred and of fury.

"Cursed be the day when thou didst enter here! The protection, which I awarded to thee, costs me dear—and my brother, when he left thee to my

care, bequeathed me as a legacy the garment of Dejanira."

At this moment she heard Sarah approach her, and her mind suddenly relapsed into a perfect calm. The sight of that amiable creature awakened all her tenderness, and she held open her arms to receive her.

"O my God—what has happened now?" cried Sarah, in an agony of trepidation. "Where, my dear aunt—where is Oliver? Whither is he gone?"

"He is going to travel for his health," replied Lady Mowbray, with a melancholy smile. "But he will return; take courage—let us not separate—and let us love each other dearly!"

Sarah dried her tears; and Metella's tenderness for her increased daily. But Oliver never returned—and Sarah knew not why.

CHAPTER II.

DE BALZAC.

For many years before the French Revolution of 1830, De Balzac had written under the name of Horace St. Aubyn ; and it is a most extraordinary fact, that, although some of his best works appeared during that period, he acquired but a very inconsiderable degree of reputation, until the events of the three days gave a new impulse to his mind and launched him at once upon the placid sea of fame and fortune. The evening saw him an unknown aspirant after those laurels which he was burning to attain : he awoke in the morning, and “ found himself famous ! ” And the success which he then experienced was not a partial one ; poor in circulation as

had been his works previous to his days of renown, as rich were they after the sudden and miraculous change which placed his name almost at the top of the long and glorious list of French writers. But it must not be supposed that a sudden caprice on the part of the public was the origin of this vicissitude of fortune; nor should it be for a moment imagined that an increase of talent procured an increase of reputation. No—the change was sudden and striking; not gradual and almost imperceptible. The career of De Balzac was not that of an ordinary author, who, by dint of perseverance and labour, gradually pushes himself into notice: it was at first dark, unpromising, and gloomy; it was suddenly snatched from that murkiness of night to the blaze of the most cloudless day. It passed not through the various degrees of twilight and of dawn: it suddenly varied from the noon of night to the noon of day.

The reason of this phenomenon in the literary heaven, was the change which had come over the spirit of M. de Balzac's dream. He saw the Revolution of July—he marked the throne of the imprudent Charles totter and fall—he witnessed the spirit with which his fellow-countrymen overthrew all despotic institutions, and his capacious mind instantly received a lesson which, though unacknowledged by

him, was essentially beneficial in more than one respect. It enlarged his views, laid open to him a wide field for observation in the scrutiny of man's characters, and made him probably one of the most acute observers in the literary world. Hence his next work was fashioned in a new mould, arrayed in new vesture, and sent forth to the world under a new form ; and no one could recognise in this fresh offspring of the fancy, ushered to public notice under the auspices of De Balzac, a brother of aught that had appeared by the title of Horace St. Aubyn. Formerly his writings were confined to the six hundred circulating libraries of Paris : now they are elegantly bound and ranged upon the shelves of every private collection of standard works throughout the kingdom. And yet, although it be full well known that Horace St. Aubyn and Honoré de Balzac are one and the same person, still the novels of the former are not a quarter in such request as those of the latter. De Balzac before the Revolution, and De Balzac since the Revolution, are two widely different men : their pursuits, their ideas, their positions, their popularity are totally discrepant the one from the other. The former breathed the atmosphere of poverty, neglect, and obscurity : the latter basks in the sunshine of public favour, prosperity,

and applause. And all this was originated by a change of style, and not by a change of name, nor a sudden caprice on the part of a fickle audience.

De Balzac is a most voluminous writer; and, like all composers of many books, has produced much that is good and much that is but indifferent. In the latter class must of course be ranked a few of the works which have appeared since his success, as well as some that were published while he yet languished in obscurity. He is, as we before observed, gifted with a wonderful degree of perception; and this, aided by a most powerful memory, enables him to sustain his elevated rank in the literary world with undiminished splendour. He is elaborate in his descriptions; but then those descriptions are so entertaining that the reader does not wish to skip a single page, nor omit the perusal of a solitary sentence. The fatiguing delineations of scenery and costume, which are read in the romances of Ann Radcliffe, weary the mind, cloy the appetite, and encourage the approach of slumber; but, though De Balzac frequently descends to the most minute details, he is never tedious nor tiresome. He will introduce his readers into a particular room, in a particular house, and in a particular street; and having placed the street in its most true colours before their eyes,

he will make them thoroughly acquainted with the structure and arrangements of the house, and then describe every nook and every corner of the room. The colour of the curtains—the pictures against the wall—the patterns of the china, are all fully detailed. Thus, when he ushers the reader into the small chamber inhabited by the widow and her daughter, in his exquisite tale entitled *La Bourse*, the introduction does not only extend to those ladies, but also to the meagre furniture which half fills their apartment, the old shawl which the mother throws around her shoulders, the manner in which the young and graceful girl fetches a few sticks from a cupboard to make a blaze in the cheerless grate, and a thousand *minutiae* which would escape the notice of a casual observer, but which constitute the principal interest in the tales of M. de Balzac. The abode of the *Vieille Fille*, in the story bearing that title, is equally graphic in description; indeed, there is scarcely one of this gentleman's novels in which the same love of detail and the same acuteness of perception may not be traced. In the princely hotel, as well as in the humble shed, is he equally at home: in the former he examines the golden cornices of the spacious halls—the texture of the tapestry—the arrangement of the tables; and

in the latter, he peers into the nook where the scanty loaf is kept—he sees where lies the deficiency of the necessities of life—and he calculates how many mouthsful the piece of meat which is cooking at the fire will make for the inmates of the hovel.

It is frequently painful to peruse the graphic descriptions of the abodes of poverty or misery which De Balzac presents to his readers. He resembles the skilful surgeon, who can detect at a glance all the infirmities of the disease which is consuming the patient to whom he is summoned. De Balzac, in delineating a prison, would not forget the spider upon the wall; and in his picture of a hovel he will enumerate particulars which would even have escaped the memory of a Hogarth himself. But how true are his descriptions! how full of reality his delineations! Painful though they be, they are a counterpart of existence; and he uses no imagery to enlist additional interest in his paintings. Simple and unadorned, they stand before the world in their primitive state of nudity; and the tears, which are shed during a contemplation of those paintings, must be real and heart-wrung tears indeed! Such is the power of this mighty artist—

for so he may with the greatest propriety be called.

La Peau de Chagrin is one of the most popular of the works of M. de Balzac. It was also the first in which he presented himself to the world as the new man, with new views, and new passions. It was the corner stone of the edifice of his success; and is justly celebrated for the richness of the imagination exhibited in its pages, the vigour with which it is penned, and the humour in which it abounds. It has been called prolix; but the minuteness of detail, which we have just represented to be so peculiar to this author, cannot possibly appear wearisome to those who take up a book with a more solid view than that of only finding an amusing story.

Les Scenes de la Vie Privée, Les Scenes de la Vie de Provence, and Les Scenes de la Vie Parisienne, are the three most important of De Balzac's productions. They are subjects which allowed full scope for the exercise of his acuteness of perception; and they abound in amusing descriptions of locality, persons, and manners, at the same time that they interest by their admirable tales. *La Femme de Trente Ans* created a most sur-

prising sensation ; for it won the hearts of those ladies who had arrived at an age when they could never hope to be adopted as the heroines of a romancer. At thirty the French woman is older, in reference to taste, appearance, and passions, than the English ; and thus the extent of the compliment paid to the former may be fully appreciated by the latter, were she to suppose that at the age of five-and-thirty she was adored in a similar manner. The French are, moreover, frivolous, vain, and conceited ; and very few married ladies, in the vortex of Parisian society, think of their domestic circles, their children, or their homes ; but pleasure, adulation, noise, love, and the voluptuous dance, alone have charms for them. Balzac's work was therefore the means of securing him the favour of the married lady of thirty ; and thus his popularity was as firmly established in the *boudoir* as it had already been in the circulating library and news-room. His publications became the study of the lady's maid when the lady had devoured them ; and the lady eulogised him to her husband and his friends, and the lady's maid to her friends again ; and De Balzac, by a brilliant stroke of policy, enlisted a numerous and a powerful audience in his favour. Add to this happy circumstance the beauty

of his style, the deep interest which pervades his tales, and that unfinished mystery in which he delights to involve his heroes or his heroines, and the secret of his vast popularity is revealed. He only required to be known to be appreciated: desperate were his efforts to obtain a footing in the literary world;—he succeeded, and is now one of the most envied and enviable authors in existence.

Eugenie Grandet is a splendid production, in which a deep and profound acquaintance with the human mind individually, and the world generally, is everywhere displayed. It is a work, one page of which is alone sufficient to confer the honours of immortality upon a writer;—it is a book which none, who have read it, can ever forget;—it is a history of mankind, seen through the mirror which reflects the life and destinies of two or three individuals. It leaves an impression behind it which the most callous and indifferent cannot easily shake off: it is a volume, each word of which falls upon the memory with as indelible a trace as molten lead on the sensitive flesh.

The *Medecin de Campagne*, *Le Père Goriot*, *Le Lys de Vallée*, and the *Récherche de l'Absolu*, are admirable in their way, but far inferior to *Eugenie Grandet*. *Le Vicaire des Ardennes*, and its conti-

uation, *Annette et le Criminel*, contain some of the most powerful passages ever penned by a modern writer. The beauty, the passion, and the sufferings of Melanie in the former; and the tender devotion, profound love, and noble conduct of Annette in the latter, at once excite the sympathies and the enthusiastic admiration of the reader. The interest—unflagging and unwearied—which pervades these two tales, carries him on with a species of galvanic force, over which he has no controul; and even the very villainies of the principal actor in these novels assume a certain air of heroism which excites something less severe than indignation or abhorrence in the mind.

The tragedy of *King Lear* has furnished M. de Balzac with the groundwork of one of his most successful tales; viz., *Le Père Goriot*, to which allusion has been slightly made above. Like Lear, father Goriot has two daughters; and when the old man has richly portioned his property between them, and left himself but a scanty pittance to support a miserable existence; and when, in his tenderness for his much-loved children, he has purchased costly things with the remnants of his means, to testify his affection to those whom he has already made rich, he dies neglected by the

children that were rendered happy by the beggary of their sire!

It would seem as if M. de Balzac roved often through the streets of Paris, in the day time, to catch the characters of men, whom he meets upon the Boulevards, from the expression of their countenances; and by night, to discover the haunts of poverty and crime, or to watch the crowds that enter or issue from the rich man's lordly mansion. He appears to be ever on the alert to collect fresh materials for a new novel; and he spares neither time nor trouble in the search of a new feature of interest. The whining beggar or the haughty paladin passes him by; and from each he borrows a moral or a character. He enters the lowest hovel or he roves through the brilliant saloons of the fashionable and proud; and he returns home with an addition to the memorandum-book of his most retentive memory. He studies much; for his writings bear evidence of profound reading on the part of their author. To him the most trivial occurrence is fraught with interest; for who but he could on such slight materials as those which originated *La Bourse*, have composed so sweetly pathetic, so interesting, and so perfect a tale? His description of the chevalier in *La*

Vieille Fille must have caused many an aristocrat of the Faubourg Saint Germain to start, when he first perused it, with the conviction that he was reading a minute delineation of himself. It is thus that this mighty magician can cast his spells around us, and weave so complicated a web of interest to retain us in its toils, that we become the willing slaves of his wand before we are even well acquainted with the witchery of his language; and then, the more he speaks, the more eagerly do we listen! His imagination is not always so fertile in incident during the progressive development of a tale, as that of many of his contemporaries; but his plots are invariably well designed, well kept up, and as admirably carried on to their *denouement*. To the casual reader, and to the one who merely occupies himself with a work for the sake of the amusement it may afford, De Balzac will often appear prolix and tedious; but to the individual who reads for instruction, who reads to ascertain the workings of the human mind in all its phases, and who reads to receive an impression somewhat more lasting than that which the mere reminiscence of a tale is capable of affording—to such an one are the writings of De Balzac invaluable and peerless treasures. De Balzac is deeply read in the history of

the world; he has profoundly studied that volume which many regard but superficially; the minutest fibres that concrete in the human heart have vibrated to his magic touch. Not a smile—not a sigh—not a look—not a tear—are unnoticed by him; and in each he sees something more real, more important, and more true, than ever meets the glance of a cursory observer. Hence has he transferred to his writings that vast knowledge which his mind had long treasured up; hence is the page of his book an echo to the tablet of his memory; and hence does he occasionally detail minutely those feelings and passions which the generality of authors usually express in one word.

It is from the work entitled *Annette et le Criminel*, that we propose to quote our illustrative extract; and while we preface it by assuring our readers that it is but a small portion of one of the most beautiful tales ever imagined, we must also observe that for the English literary world, it is eminently calculated to exhibit the form and mode in which criminal justice is distributed in France.

THE TRIAL.

The morning of the trial dawned, and the judges, in the presence of an immense crowd, took their

seats in the majestic hall of justice. A large crucifix* was placed above the chair occupied by the president; the jury was on the right of the tribunal, and the accused on the left; the king's procurator, M. de Ruysan, was almost close to the prisoner, whom the gendarmes guarded on both sides; and Charles Servigné, the counsel for the accused, was only separated from his client by the partition formed by the sort of box or pew in which the latter was placed.

When M. de Durantal appeared, the glances of all present were concentrated in his person with a species of avidity; and the effects produced were a variety of conflicting sentiments in the minds of the spectators. The windows that gave light to the hall were on that side where the jury sate; thus each ray fell upon the features of the accused, and no change in his countenance could escape the eyes of his judges.

The nomination of the jury having taken place in the usual way, the indictment was read by the clerk of the court in the following terms:—

“For a considerable space of time the governments of various states have been aware of the existence of

* The events related in *Annette et le Criminel* are supposed to have taken place in the year 1816.

an execrable pirate named Argow, who chiefly infested the American seas. The delinquencies of this individual commenced by the total destruction of a Spanish fleet that was employed in conveying specie from Havannah to Cadiz. Argow himself was originally mate in the *Daphnis* frigate, at that time under the command of Saint André, a rear-admiral in the service of France. Argow incited a mutiny amongst the crew, and seized upon the frigate, having landed the marquis, and all the officers who remained faithful to their commander, on a desert island, whence none but the marquis himself ever returned to France.

“The skill of the pirate and his crew for a long time defeated the aims and pursuits of those governments which his horrible piracies had irritated against him. Argow was, however, at length wrecked on the coast of the United States, and was immediately captured and conveyed to Charles-town, where the criminal law adjudged him to die. He nevertheless managed to escape from his impending doom, and obtained an unconditional pardon.

“The vast accumulation of his riches now inspired him with the idea of returning to France, and living tranquilly, if possible, upon the produce

of his crimes. He fancied that his immense wealth, and the secluded life he intended to lead, would effectually shield him from all danger and from all suspicion. And in this he would probably have succeeded, had not a new series of crimes drawn upon him the notice of justice.

"In 18—, Argow, who since his return to France adopted the name of Maxendi, purchased several estates, and amongst others, the lands of Durantal. One of his friends, named Vernyct—an individual whom no proofs have yet criminally identified as an accomplice—"

"Would that it were otherwise!" exclaimed a terrible voice, which seemed to proceed from the midst of the crowd.

The author of this singular interruption was sought for in vain; but his ejaculation appeared to have excited the feelings of the accused; for he said in an almost inaudible tone to Charles Servigné, "Oh! now I feel that I am not without friends!"

"This Vernyct," continued the clerk, when order was once more restored, "bought—whether for himself or his friends, does not appear—a considerable landed property at Vans-la-Pavée. His lordship, the Bishop of A——y, possessed a large estate adjoining the new acquisitions of Vernyct; and it

appears that the two estates were so connected with each other, that Maxendi and Vernyct went to A——y to purchase the portion of the territory which then belonged to the bishop.

“ His lordship was the brother of the marquis of Saint André, who had just returned to France ; and when Maxendi and Vernyct appeared at the palace of the bishop, they were accidentally confronted by the rear-admiral himself. The marquis sent for the gendarmerie to arrest the culprit Argow, whom he immediately recognised ; but circumstances enabled the delinquent and Vernyct to escape in safety from the prelate's residence.

“ Shortly after this interview, the marquis of Saint André was found a corpse in his bed-chamber ; and Argow departed during the night.”

The indictment was then brought to a conclusion ; and a detail of circumstantial evidence was forthwith entered upon in the ensuing manner :—

“ No sooner was the death of the marquis discovered, when the bishop, suspecting that his brother had fallen a victim to the terrible pirate Argow, summoned the proper authorities, and an inquest was immediately held upon the body. It was ascertained that the marquis had met a violent death, without sustaining any great corporeal in-

jury; for the tide of his life had suddenly been arrested and frozen by the effects of a subtle vegetable poison which scarcely left a trace behind it. The surgeons, who attended the inquest, subsequently ascertained that the artery in the right arm had been perforated by some instrument as diminutive as the point of a pin; and their opinion was unhesitatingly given as to the fact that the death of the marquis had been caused by this almost invisible wound.

“The surgeons, influenced by their curiosity as well as by a sense of duty, carefully examined the flesh in the immediate vicinity of the wound; and the result of their researches was the discovery of the smallest possible fragment of the pointed instrument that had pierced the artery. The medical men, thus put in possession of the remainder of a substance as yet unknown to them, thrust the fragment into the chief artery in the neck of a dog, the consequences of which experiment were instantaneously fatal to the animal, and the same symptoms appeared in its body as those that had developed themselves in the corpse of the deceased marquis.

“It was then that the most minute and vigorous search ensued; and the traces of footsteps upon the floor of the marquis’s bed-chamber at length

indicated that the murderer must have escaped by the chimney. The chimney was therefore examined with care ; and it was shortly ascertained that an individual had evidently issued from the apartment through that *medium*. The chimney-pots were broken, and the pieces scattered about in the court below.

“ In the garden the footsteps of a man were again distinguished on some sand which had been raked the day before ; and the dimensions of the steps thus imprinted were immediately taken. Those steps, some of which were turned towards the bishop’s palace, and others receding from it towards the garden-wall, were very numerous.

“ On the top of the chimney was discovered a cramp iron, to which a long cord, reaching into the garden, was appended ; and on the inquiry being made throughout the town, it was ascertained that the wife of a certain ironmonger had sold the iron and six similar ones to a stranger on the preceding evening. The remaining six irons were subsequently found upon the wall overlooking the garden. When questioned relative to the appearance of the stranger who had purchased the irons, the ironmonger’s wife immediately described the person of M. de Durantal.

"The landlady of the hotel, at which Argow lodged, declared that her guest was absent from the inn during the early portion of the night when the murder was committed, and that he left the hotel at one o'clock in the morning.

"In consequence of this information, pursuit was immediately instituted after Argow or Max-endi; but the endeavours of justice to capture the supposed criminal, were invariably eluded by him."

The clerk of the court paused for a moment, then turned to another document which lay near him, and read as follows:—

"M. de Durantal, a short time ago, killed a mad bull in his own park, by simply pricking a vein in the animal's neck with a sharp instrument made of the bone of a fish, and which instrument he usually carried in a ring upon his finger. The bull fell down dead the moment the little instrument perforated its skin.

"The ring, in which that instrument was concealed, was seized upon the person of M. de Durantal at the moment of his arrest. The point of the instrument is broken off; and the fragment which was found in the body of the marquis of Saint André, exactly fits the place where the fracture has occurred. The colour of the poison in the

fragment, and of that in the portion of the instrument that was discovered in M. de Durantal's ring, is precisely the same. Several witnesses will prove that M. de Durantal is the same individual who visited A——y, as aforesaid; and the dimensions of M. de Durantal's footsteps correspond with the size of those traces that were left in the sand," &c., &c., &c.

Then followed the usual peroration in such cases, and the official signature of the king's procurator. The indictment being thus brought to a termination, the president put the usual interrogatories to the prisoner.

"What is your name?"

"My name," replied the accused, "is neither Argow nor Maxendi. I adopted the title of De Durantal because I purchased the estate which bears that appellation."

Charles Servigné, the counsel for the accused, rose and observed to the jury—"Gentlemen, you will take notice that the prisoner is neither Argow nor Maxendi, and that the identity has been in no way established."

"Sir," said the president, addressing himself to Servigné, "that remark is unseasonable. It should form a portion of your defence."

Charles bowed, and remained silent. The president once more addressed himself to the prisoner.

"Does that ring belong to you?" enquired the president.

The prisoner replied in the affirmative.

"Did you ever serve under the marquis of Saint André?"

"I did, Sir," was the answer.

"Were you one of the crew that manned the *Daphnis*?"

The accused again responded in an affirmative.

"At what period?"

"In 180—."

"When did you return to France?"

"In 181—."

"Were you the individual who called upon his lordship the Bishop of A———y, with the intention of purchasing an estate in that neighbourhood?" pursued the president.

"The same, Sir!" answered the accused.

"At what period did this take place?"

"I cannot recollect the date of my visit to his lordship."

This reply caused a visible emotion of pleasure in the breast of the anxious Charles Servigné.

"Did you see the marquis of Saint André at his brother's residence?"

"I did."

"Was it in the morning or in the evening?"

"Both. I saw the marquis once in the morning and once in the evening."

"The gentlemen of the jury will observe," exclaimed Charles, "that the indictment only mentions one visit."

"When did you leave A———y?" continued the president.

"Shortly after my second interview with the marquis," replied the accused.

"Did you remain in the hotel where you lodged, the whole time that intervened between the second visit and your departure from A———y?"

The prisoner replied firmly in the negative.

"What did you do, then, during that interval?"

"At this moment Charles Servigné rose abruptly from his seat and addressing himself to the president, exclaimed, "Sir, I cannot allow my client to answer that question. Either he will confess that he murdered the marquis of Saint André, or he must remain silent. In both cases, your question is therefore useless; for if he acknowledge the crime,

the ends of justice will not be one atom benefited by the avowal; since, according to the laws of France, a prisoner cannot criminate himself."

The king's procurator was about to interfere in favour of the question being again put, when the president cut short any wrangling upon that head, by continuing the examination.

"Accused, how came the poisonous instrument in your possession?"

"I received it as a present from the chief of a tribe of savages in North America."

"Were you not arrested at Charlestown, and condemned as a pirate?"

"I was."

"The jury will recollect," again interrupted Charles, "that the indictment contains no clause whereupon to prosecute the accused for those pretended piracies to which the president alludes; and that even if such piracies were proved, no verdict could be given against the prisoner on that account."

"Certainly not," exclaimed the president. "My only object in putting the question to the accused was to establish that identity which you of course will attempt to destroy.—Prisoner," continued the judge, "was it not with that indential instrument

that you caused the death of a bull in your park at Durantal?"

The accused replied in the affirmative.

"Had the chief of the tribe of savages many of those instruments in his possession?"

"I do not know."

"Did any other of your companions become possessed of such instruments?"

"Of that also I am ignorant."

"Were you alone in communication with that chief?"

"No, Sir. Many of my companions had frequent intercourse with the tribe alluded to."

"Did any of those companions return to France with you?"

"A considerable number."

"Wherefore, having fitted up so splendid an establishment at Vans-la-Pavée, have you never returned to that place since the murder of the marquis of Saint André?"

"A rapid succession of circumstances during the last two years has totally precluded the possibility of my visiting that estate. Besides," continued M. de Durantal, "the property is not mine own—it belongs to one of my friends."

"Were you not arrested at Aulnay-le-Vicomte?"

"Yes; but not as a criminal. My detention originated in the device of an individual who was desirous of eluding pursuit on my part."

"Wherefore, then, did you offer four thousand pounds sterling, and even pay the money, to ensure the means of escape?"

"Because I was anxious to be in Paris by a certain time; and Heaven is my witness, that I did not dread the danger to which you may fancy I was exposed. I was the victim of a passion, which, at that period, agitated me cruelly."

At this stage of the proceedings, the president ordered some menial attendants of the court to spread a quantity of sand on the floor immediately opposite the box in which the jury were seated, and requested M. de Durantal to walk over it. The clerk of the court measured the traces left upon the sand by the footsteps of the accused; and the prisoner having been re-conducted to his place, the king's procurator proceeded to the examination of the witnesses.

The first witness summoned upon this occasion was the landlady of the hotel at which Argow had

lodged when at A——y. She declared that the features of the prisoner were perfectly familiar to her; and that her memory in a moment identified M. de Durantal with the individual who had departed so mysteriously from her inn on the night when the murder was committed.

“How long was he at your hotel?” enquired the public minister.

“One day and the half of a night,” was the answer.

“You have brought your books into court with you,” continued the king’s procurator; “and are therefore able to name the very day on which Argow arrived at your hotel.”

“The 23rd of October, 181—,” answered the hostess.

“The gentlemen of the jury will observe,” said the procurator, “that on the 23rd of October was the murder committed; for it was discovered on the ensuing morning at six o’clock.”

The witness, upon farther examination, would not take upon herself to affirm at what hour, and for how long a time, the prisoner was absent from the hotel. The chamber-maid, when summoned to the witness-box, however, deposed that the post-

horses were ordered to be ready at one precisely in the morning, and that he was in his apartment when he was summoned by her at that hour.

"Do you know at what o'clock he left the hotel in the early part of that night?" enquired the public minister.

"He went out at eight o'clock in the evening to go to the Bishop's Palace," answered the girl, "and returned to the hotel an hour afterwards. But from that moment till the chaise arrived at the door at one, I did not notice that he left the inn. One circumstance, however, I recollect; that three strangers issued from the apartment of the accused at about nine o'clock, and that the accused, as I before stated, was in that apartment at one in the morning."

"Was the front door of the hotel open during the night in question?"

"Yes—for there was a great number of people staying in the hotel."

"When the individual, whom you state to be the accused, returned to the hotel at nine o'clock," enquired Charles Servigné, "and when he left it again at one in his carriage, did he, on either occasion, appear agitated?"

"He did not," replied the servant, firmly.

The third witness was now summoned : it was the wife of the ironmonger of A———y, at whose house the cramp-irons had been purchased. She declared that she recollected the accused perfectly well, and that his were a form and features which, if once seen, could never be forgotten.

"I understand," said Charles Servigné to the witness, "that you are accustomed to sit in a back-shop, and that you never light up the front one at all?"

"It was by the light of the lamp," began the witness, "that—"

"The gentlemen of the jury," interrupted Charles, "will decide to what extent they may trust this evidence, especially as the lamp is not in front of the shop occupied by witness and her husband."

"Is the lamp in front of your shop, or not?" demanded M. de Ruysan, the public minister.

"Not quite," was the reply.

"Sit down," said the procurator.

The president now informed the jury that the very infirm state of health experienced by the Bishop of A———y, did not permit his lordship to give oral evidence at that tribunal; but a written series of testimony had been duly forwarded for the consideration of the court. The president then read

the document in question; and its contents were anything but favourable to the cause of M. de Durantal. Indeed, his lordship the Bishop of A——y declared that when Argow encountered the marquis of Saint André so unexpectedly, as before alluded to, the former made use of an expression which evidently intimated his desire to rid himself of the latter altogether.

Here terminated the case for the prosecution; and the president informed Charles Servigné that he might call his witnesses for the defence.

M. Badger, ex-prefect of the department, was first summoned; and according to his testimony, M. de Durantal was present as late as twelve o'clock at night, at a ball given by the witness in Paris, on the 21st of October, 181—. This important deposition was confirmed by at least a dozen respectable persons who were also at M. Badger's ball, and who there became acquainted with M. de Durantal.

Charles now summoned three of the servants, and the porter belonging to the establishment of the Lord Bishop of A——y. These witnesses declared, that about half-past nine o'clock on the night when the murder was committed, a stranger—but certainly not M. de Durantal—presented himself at the gate of the Bishop's palace, and desired

to be conducted to the apartment of the marquis of Saint André. The stranger carried a large parcel in his hand ; and the porter believing that the package belonged to the marquis, called the *valet-de-chambre*, and desired him to show the stranger to the bed-room occupied by that nobleman.

" Which of you was the one that thus introduced the stranger to the apartment of the marquis ?" demanded the president.

" It was I," answered the Bishop's *valet-de-chambre*.

" Did either of you see him leave the palace ?" enquired the president.

" We did not, Sir," was the general reply.

" Porter," cried the president, " did *you* see that man return after he had left the palace the first time ?"

" I cannot say for certain."

" The palace-gate is usually open, I believe ?"

" Nearly always, Sir."

" Was it closed upon the night in question ?"

" My memory will not permit me to reply."

" Was the parcel unpacked ?" enquired the president of the three servants, successively.

" It was, Sir," replied the *valet-de-chambre* ; " and on examination of its contents we found nothing save old rags, worthless papers, and a variety

of articles that we fancied had been addressed to the marquis in a moment of pleasantry, by some wag."

"What sort of a person was the stranger who carried the parcel to the palace?"

"Short—fat—and vulgar," replied the *valet-de-chambre*; "badly dressed, and wearing iron-heeled shoes on his feet."

Servigné desired these witnesses to retire; and after a momentary pause, addressed the court as follows:—

"I have yet one witness to call—but under such peculiar circumstances that I am almost ashamed to mention my request."

"Proceed," said the president, encouragingly.

"My desire is," continued Charles, "that the witness I am about to call shall not be interrogated farther than he may choose to submit to such ordeal; and that when he shall have given that testimony which will speedily convince the gentlemen of the jury of the innocence of my client, he shall be allowed to depart without risk or peril to his own personal safety, whatever may be the nature of his evidence."

The king's procurator was strongly opposed to this extraordinary manner of proceeding; but the

foreman of the jury declared that his own conscience, and the consciences of his fellow-jurymen, would not be satisfied unless the proposed evidence were laid before them. The president accordingly consulted with his brother judges; and it was eventually agreed that the anonymous witness should be introduced.

No sooner was the decree of the court thus pronounced, when a man, of enormous stature and fierce aspect, stepped up to the very desk at which the president was seated; and having placed in the hand of that magistrate an instrument exactly resembling the one found upon the person of M. de Durantal, he retired as suddenly as he had appeared.

It was now six o'clock in the evening, and the president declared that the trial must be resumed on the following morning. The last event which had occurred, had excited the most acute curiosity in the breasts of all present; and the next day was eagerly looked forward to by those who knew full well that the defence was to be made within four-and-twenty hours, and that the same period would probably make known the fate of M. de Durantal.

When the court sate on the following morning, the president submitted the poisoned instrument so

singularly placed in evidence the day before by the anonymous witness, to the examination of the jury; and it was immediately pronounced to be exactly similar to the one found upon the person of M. de Durantal. The president then desired the king's procurator to address the jury; but the public minister, by a skilful subterfuge, declared that the basis of the accusation being already well founded, he would prefer reserving himself to reply to the defence that was about to be set up by the prisoner's counsel.

A smile of disdain appeared upon the lips of Charles Servigné, as he rose to address the jury; and at that moment the most solemn silence reigned throughout the hall. Every eye was turned towards the young barrister, who seemed to be the centre of every thought in that extensive audience. The noise of a spider weaving its fragile web upon the wall, would have been heard when Servigné thus prepared to speak.

He had neither *memoranda* nor notes: he trusted entirely to his own faithful memory, and yet did not despair of saving his client from an ignominious doom. Suffering the tone of his voice to assume a plaintive and melancholy cadence, and casting

an appealing glance towards the jury, as if to supplicate their most undivided attention to his argument, Servigné commenced as follows :—

“ I shall not prelude my defence of the prisoner at the bar, gentlemen of the jury, by reminding you of your wisdom and sagacity: flattery on such occasions is useless; for we well know that impartial judges do not condemn a man to death in the gaiety of their hearts, nor in a mood of self-satisfaction. Neither shall I attempt to mystify the case by a series of those metaphysical reasonings to which counsel have such frequent recourse in matters of difficulty and danger. It will be in facts—and in facts alone, gentlemen—such facts as the development of the trial has itself progressively furnished—that I shall look for those arguments whereby the innocence of the prisoner will be fully and satisfactorily proven.

“ Several witnesses of known respectability have assured you that on the evening of the 21st of October, M. de Durantal was at a ball given by M. Badger, a gentleman of American extraction, in Paris; and those witnesses moreover declared that so late as twelve o'clock on the same night, they saw the prisoner at M. Badger's house.”

Servigné handed the card of invitation, addressed to M. Maxendi, to the jury, and resumed his defence with the ensuing explanation.

“ Gentlemen of the jury, it would be ridiculous to deny the identity of the prisoner with Maxendi and Argow. Maxendi was a chief of a tribe of savages who saved the prisoner’s life many years ago: and the prisoner, in order to exemplify his gratitude to the utmost of his power, adopted the name of Maxendi. Previous to this occurrence, he had been known amongst the crew with which he served, as Argow.

“ Now, gentlemen, I might, at this stage of the defence, request you to weigh well in your minds, whether it were barely probable, even if possible, for the prisoner to have been at A——y on the 23rd, especially as he had passed by Vans-la-Pavée, and tarried there a short time. But these means of proving an *alibi* are the last resource to which innocence will fly, when a thousand other proofs await your consideration.

“ You are aware of the relative positions of myself and the accused: I am his cousin by marriage—and it was my jealousy that, in a great measure, contributed to place him at that bar. I now defend him, because, if it shall appear that he has

been criminal, he has also done much in aid of virtue ;—to save him, therefore, is my hope—my dearest hope ; nay—more, it is my duty—even if he were culpable !

“ Commencing with such frankness and so singular an avowal, you will at once perceive that I am thoroughly convinced of the guiltlessness of my client, and of my power to demonstrate his innocence. Indeed, you will observe, during the development of the defence, that the same loyal frankness will reign throughout my discourse, and that the justification of the prisoner will result from that sincerity ; inasmuch as the desired aim will be compassed, not by means of witnesses in favour of the accused, but by the depositions of those very witnesses whom the public minister has himself summoned to give evidence before this tribunal.

“ The prisoner, say some of these witnesses, went to the Bishop’s palace at eight o’clock, and returned to the hotel at nine ; and from that moment no one can say that he again left his apartment until one in the morning, when he quitted A——y altogether.

“ Now from nine o’clock to one there is an interval of four hours ; and it was during these four hours, argues the indictment, that the murder must

have been committed. What is the duty of the king's procurator? To enable you, gentlemen of the jury, to follow the criminal step by step in all his actions—that you may see him, as it were, actually advancing towards the criminal moment, and committing the crime itself. But in this case, you have nothing, save the evidence of the Bishop of A——y; and his lordship's testimony may be speedily invalidated by the fact, that as he was aware of the former events in the prisoner's life, he might readily have imagined his brother to be the object of the hatred and alarm of M. de Durantal.

“Thus, in its very prelude, is the indictment miserably defective; for it cannot prove, nor even assert, that the prisoner left the hotel during those four memorable hours.

“You have next the testimony of the wife of the ironmonger, at whose shop the seven iron-bars were purchased. She declares that it was on the evening in question, but she particularizes no hour. If the prisoner were the author of the crime, it must be proven that he *again* left his hotel after having returned to it, as already demonstrated, at nine o'clock. In order to have purchased the bars, then, he must have left that hotel at a quarter-past nine, or at half-past nine, perhaps.

“ In those three hours and a half that remained, what would the indictment seem to say that the prisoner had effected? Scaled the walls of the palace—murdered the marquis of Saint André—and then returned to the hotel, where he regained his usual tranquillity of aspect, and passed a certain time in his bed. All this was perfected, according to the indictment, unnoticed by a single witness, who could say, ‘I saw the prisoner in the street once during those three hours and a half,’ Truly, this was a marvellous performance in the face of so many obstacles! The hotel was full of passengers—the street door was left open all night—and this latter circumstance alone proves that the servants of the inn must have maintained a sharp watch upon the egress and ingress of individuals about the premises.

“ The ironmonger has a large family—and his shop is situate in one of the most populous quarters of A——y, and yet no one saw the prisoner, save the wife of the shopkeeper himself. And this witness declares that the lamp was lighted when the prisoner called to purchase the cramp-irons. Now at that period of the month of October, on account of the early moon-light, the lamps at A——y were not lit until half-past ten o’clock at night.

Here is the certificate of the mayor to ratify the truth of my assertion, and another from the municipal contractor to a similar purpose. Thus the prisoner had actually little more than two hours to effect those various deeds which I ere now detailed.

“It however happens that on the very night when the murder was committed, a stranger, carrying under his arm a large package of things which eventually proved to be nothing but rubbish, was introduced into the palace, and conducted to the very apartment of the marquis of Saint André. It is not proven that he again left the palace, or that he did not return; the porter cannot tax his memory with having seen him depart by the great gate which formed the only means of egress from the bishop's residence. A stranger, I repeat, was thus introduced into the palace: the marquis was assassinated; the contents of the parcel prove that the stranger's object in calling at the palace was any thing but a proper and straight-forward purpose; and yet it is the prisoner who is accused of the crime! There are proofs—strong proofs against the stranger; there cannot now remain even a breath of suspicion against M. de Durantal; and yet—the former is at large; and the latter, at the bar of a criminal tribunal!”

Servigné paused for a moment, and then requested the president to summon once more the *valet-de-chambre* of the Bishop of A——y, and the chamber-maid of the hotel where the prisoner had lodged. This demand was immediately complied with; and Charles wrote upon a piece of paper the questions he wished to be put to the witnesses thus recalled into court.

“At what o’clock did the marquis of Saint André retire to rest?” demanded the president, of the *valet-de-chambre*.

“At ten,” was the reply; and the domestic adduced several circumstances to prove that the exact hour was really engraven on his memory.

The president then addressed himself to the chamber-maid.

“Did the sheets of the prisoner’s bed at the hotel seem to indicate that he had reposed in them?”

The reply was unhesitatingly given in the affirmative.

“Gentlemen of the jury,” continued Charles, “had the prisoner retired to rest at half-past nine, he would only have had little more than three hour’s repose after a long and tedious journey. I now come to that portion of my explanation which will show, firstly, wherefore the marquis of Saint

André did not cause the prisoner to be arrested when they met at the palace of the Bishop; secondly, why it was not necessary for the prisoner to rid himself by murder of the marquis; and thirdly, the reason of the prisoner's departure from the hotel at one o'clock in the morning.

"M. de Durantal, being enamoured of Melanie the only daughter of the marquis of Saint André, carried her forcibly away to his *chateau* at Vans-la-Pavée, and there detained her with the hope of securing her affections. When the prisoner found himself in the presence of the marquis of Saint André, at the Bishop's Palace, and when the enraged nobleman was about to summon the aid of the police to secure M. de Durantal, the latter whispered but one word in the ear of the distracted father, and a compact was immediately entered into. The stipulations were to the effect, that M. de Durantal should restore Melanie to the bosom of her sire—that after a few hours of necessary repose, M. de Durantal should hasten to Vans-la-Pavée and fetch the imprisoned daughter—and that a total oblivion of past events, on the part of the marquis, was to be the recompense for the fulfilment of these conditions.

"M. de Durantal *did* depart, according to the

agreement, so soon as exhausted nature had been slightly refreshed; but on his arrival at his *chateau* at Vans-la-Pavée, he found that Melanie had escaped a few hours before. It was on that occasion, also, that M. de Durantal was arrested by the false representations of Melanie's lover; and his determination to pursue the fugitives as speedily as possible, prompted him to obtain his immediate liberty, even at the price of four thousand pounds sterling.

"The gentlemen of the jury will call to mind," continued Charles, "that M. de Durantal might have sought that security in Germany or the Netherlands, or even in England, which, if guilty, he could not possibly expect to enjoy in France, had he been so disposed. There was a variety of plans for him to resort to, and all less terrible and dangerous than the assassination of the marquis.

"I now come, gentlemen, to another portion of the evidence against my client. It is that which relates to the dimensions of the footsteps. Without attaching much importance to the fact, that an individual of the rank and fortune of M. de Durantal, would scarcely have worn iron-shod boots, I beg to observe, that the indictment has omitted a most important fact. Amongst the footsteps dis-

covered upon the sand in the garden of his lordship the Bishop of A——y, were others of a different size and shape to those which are supposed to have been the imprints of the feet of M. de Durantal. Hence it is evident that two individuals walked upon the sand during that night. Might not the steps which were not measured have been those of the real murderer? and because the size of M. de Durantal's steps corresponds with that of another's, will an intelligent jury condemn him to death upon so slight an evidence? Is it not probable that the stranger, who introduced himself so suspiciously into the palace with a parcel of worthless effects, was the author of the crime—and that the unmeasured steps were his? So far as regards the evidence of the ironmonger's wife, the fact of the lamp being upwards of thirteen feet to the left of her shop, and the unsatisfactory nature of her testimony, are sufficient to throw discredit upon her assertions.

“Gentlemen of the jury, it is now for you to recollect that the cramp-irons were not purchased many minutes before eleven o'clock—that to scale the wall of the palace, ascend the building itself, enter into the marquis's apartment by the chimney, consummate the crime, and return by the same

way, scarcely two hours remained—and that at one o'clock M. de Durantal was in his bed-chamber at the hotel. Might not the crime have been committed *after* one o'clock?—and in that case the indictment fails to affect us. In fine, is it impossible that the stranger so often alluded to, was a secret enemy of the unfortunate marquis?

“The indictment declares that the first bar was discovered on the top of the chimney. If M. de Durantal scaled the wall, how did he scale the exterior of the palace itself? Is it not probable that the aforesaid stranger, when introduced into the apartment of the marquis, took notice of the position of the chimney, &c., and eventually returning to that apartment, ascended the chimney, fixed the bar on the summit, and thereto attached a cord by which he descended into the garden? What blanks—what voids are there to be filled up in order to render the indictment against the prisoner at all complete! and how clear—how natural were all his movements—all his actions! If the indictment in *this case* be clear, to-morrow I would concoct a far more feasible one against the stranger, whom I sincerely and devoutly believe to be the author of the crime.”

A murmur of approbation, even on the part

of several of the jury, succeeded the observations made by M. Charles Servigné; and even M. de Ruysan, the king's procurator, appeared struck by the nature of the defence. He, however, essayed to conceal his emotion by closely investigating the two poisoned instruments that had been handed to him by the president.

"One word more," said Charles, after a short pause. "Gentlemen of the jury," continued he with an air of satisfaction, "is it not probable that the stranger, who was yesterday so mysteriously introduced into court, might have been the assassin of the marquis of Saint André; and that, touched by the pangs of remorse, he came, without implicating himself, to constitute the innocence of the prisoner at the bar?"

At this moment M. de Durantal said in a low tone of voice, "Great God! what puissance hast thou not given to the words of man!"

"What therefore remains?" ejaculated Charles with a vehemence and energy he had not hitherto used, "save the testimony afforded by the poisoned instruments? But, so long as it shall not be proven that the instrument found upon the person of M. de Durantal was the immediate cause of the

death of the marquis of Saint André—so long as it shall be demonstrated that the other is equally venomous and prompt in its effects, M. de Durantal cannot be found guilty by a jury chosen amongst the impartial citizens of France !

“ I do not for one moment hesitate to say, that an indictment on the score of piracy and mutiny would have been more successfully maintained than an accusation of murder ; but in the former, as in this latter case, we should haply have found arguments competent to refute the reasoning of the public minister.”

The defence was now concluded ; and when Charles Servigné sate down almost exhausted, the hall rang with the applauding shouts of the audience, and the crowds on the Grande Place exclaimed unanimously, “ He is saved ! he is saved ! ” The tidings of Servigné’s eloquent defence had indeed spread like wildfire.

The king’s procurator rose to reply ; and a death-like silence reigned throughout the hall.

“ Gentlemen of the jury,” said M. de Ruysan, “ I will freely admit that the several clauses of an indictment have never been more successfully refuted than in the present instance. But, at the

same time, the reasoning of M. Charles Servigné is not conclusive. The instrument that was yesterday laid before the jury is in some degree dissimilar to the one which was found on the person of M. de Durantal. The latter is not tinged with the colour of the poison, in which it had evidently been dipped, on the diminutive surface left bare by the fracture, and to which the broken piece exactly fits; whereas the other is coloured in that particular spot;"—and as he uttered these words, M. de Ruysan handed the two instruments to the clerk, who passed them to the jury.

While those twelve judges of the guilt or innocence of M. de Durantal were occupied, one after another, in strict and close examination of the two poisoned instruments, the king's procurator requested the president to send for two chemists and two naturalists, in order that the aforesaid instruments might be submitted to their inspection.

The trial was accordingly suspended for a short time; and, during the interval that elapsed ere it was resumed, M. de Ruysan received a letter which appeared to excite an extraordinary degree of emotion in his breast.

"This is most important," said the public minister, passing the letter to the president; "for by

that epistle I am informed, by the procurator-general of the department, that the stranger—the individual who penetrated with the package into the chamber of the marquis of Saint André, and on whom M. Servigné in his able defence threw the imputation of the murder—that stranger will be forthcoming as a witness to-morrow morning. As yet I am totally at a loss to conjecture whether his evidence will be favourable or injurious to the prisoner's cause; but the ends of justice must be aided on the one hand, and the accused must not be despoiled of a single chance of escape on the other. I accordingly request that the cause may be adjourned until to-morrow."

This demand was immediately complied with, and M. de Durantal was condemned to another night of uncertainty and doubt.

On the following morning the court was, if possible, more crowded than on the preceding days of the trial. The chemists made their report, which was to the effect that the poison in which M. de Durantal's instrument had been dipped, was entirely unknown to them; but that the venom of the other was a certain combination with which they were perfectly familiar. The naturalists then deposed, that the bone, of which the former was com-

posed, belonged to a fish they were not acquainted with; but that the latter was made of a bone taken from a salmon, and had even been cut and modified by certain sharp tools.

No sooner was this evidence disposed of, than the stranger, whose testimony was deemed to be so important, appeared in the witness-box. To this individual every eye was now turned; and it was speedily ascertained that he was the same "short and fat person" described by the porter and *valet-de-chambre* of the Bishop of A——y.

The witness, upon being questioned by the president, declared that he was a native of Auvergne, that his name was Jean Gratinat, and that he resided in the mountains of Cantal.

"Were you ever at A——y?" inquired the president.

"I lived there six months," was the reply.

"What did you go to A——y for?"

"To earn my livelihood."

"And wherefore did you leave A——y in six months?"

"Because I made my fortune, Sir."

"In what manner?"

"A gentleman gave me four hundred and fifty

pounds, and sent me back to my native place in his own coach, for having carried a parcel to the bishop's palace."

"And nothing else?" enquired the president.

"Merely for having told him where a certain room was situate," answered the witness.

A profound terror reigned throughout the hall; and Charles Servigné himself appeared overcome by this damning evidence.

"Should you recognise the gentleman who gave you the money, if you were to see him?" continued the president.

"Yes, Sir," was the answer.

"Is it the prisoner?"

"No."

A murmur of astonishment ran through the court.

"Do you know the prisoner?"

Perfectly well."

"How came you to know him?"

"It was he who promised me the reward—he gave me the parcel to carry into the palace—he enabled me to marry the girl that I loved—he is my benefactor, the author of my prosperity."

The witness was dismissed, and the king's pro-

curator, rising to sustain the accusation, spoke with a facility and eloquence worthy of Charles Servigné himself. Charles replied to the arguments adduced by the public minister; but his defence was no longer based upon logical principles—it was specious and metaphysical. The president then summed up the evidence with impartiality and talent, and placed the question in a manner perfectly comprehensible to the meanest capacity. The jury accordingly retired, and deliberated upon their verdict upwards of four hours and a half. At the termination of that period they returned into court, and never was suspense more acute—never was anxiety more terrible than in that moment.

The foreman of the jury rose, and declared, in the form prescribed by the criminal code, that the unanimous verdict of the jury was *Guilty!*

M. de Durantal was accordingly condemned to suffer the penalty of death by decapitation.

When the awful sentence of the law had been pronounced by the president in solemn and befitting terms, the prisoner rose, and addressed the jury as follows:—

“Gentlemen of the jury, if by accident one single shadow of doubt as to my guilt remained upon

your minds, let me disperse it by declaring, in the face of God and my fellow-creatures, that your verdict was a just decision. I acknowledge myself to be the murderer of the marquis Saint André; and, having now made my peace with the world, may Heaven pardon me!"


CHAPTER III.

EUGENE SUE.

Now that France is rapidly becoming one of the greatest naval powers in the world, it is but fair that she should possess her maritime novelists as well as England. She has had eulogisers of her armies and military prowess without number; and she has at length found an author whose delight is to paint the scenes of storm, battle, and shipwreck, in glowing colours. Totally devoid of that intolerable vulgarity which characterises many of the naval novels of English writers, the works of Eugene Sue are as well fitted for the lady's *boudoir* as for the officer's ward-room. They are written in a bold and happy style, which never relapses into

coarseness; and even his details of the characters and conversations of the rough mariners whom he patronises, are replete with delicacy and simplicity. His ships are floating palaces, though they smell of powder, of pitch; and of tar; and his heroes have other attributes besides their naval rank and warlike qualities, to interest the reader. M. Eugene Sue has founded the French maritime school of novel; and, like many other originators of new systems or new institutions, has reaped an ample harvest of reputation and of pecuniary emolument.

It must, however, be observed of M. Sue, that his imagination is only rich in inventing and stringing together a host of improbabilities, occasionally bordering upon monstrosity. To say that the incidents of his tales are *just possible*, is to concede a great deal to this author; but then the very improbabilities, which spring exotic from his own strange fancy, are so full of deep and absorbing interest, that the reader forgets whether they be natural or revolting to the most credulous mind, in the amusement which he derives from the contemplation of them. Hence it is well known that the poverty of an author's imagination may be readily supplied by artificial means; and, as the genius of a great writer vested even the existence of the



giant in *Frankenstein* with an air of truth and interest which imposed upon the reader, so does the talent of M. Eugene Sue conceal the deformities of those singular beings which his own imagination has conceived and endowed with life.

It will be seen by the extract we shall presently adduce as a specimen of this author's abilities, that he is as much at home in the pathetic and sentimental as he is conversant with the wild, the gay, the satirical, and the animated. But his pathos is not the whining and sickly murmuring of a Werter; it is the true and natural ebullition of the human heart. In this, at least, he is not at variance with probability: on the contrary, he is a master in painting and delineating the passions and the feelings of his fellow-creatures. It is in the incidents, and not in the characters, of his tales that he disputes with fact; he has seen too much of the world, in all its phases and varied hues, to have taken wrong views of its true colours, or to have imbibed defective impressions relative to its principles.

The novels of Eugene Sue are like melo-dramas in five acts, throughout which the unities are totally lost sight of. His scenery shifts and varies as often as that of the theatre; and each

chapter is a new act, commencing with new characters whose range of action is transferred to a new sphere. From the deck of the gallant vessel, magician-like—or rather dramatist-like, he will transport the reader to the regal halls of a monarch's abode; from the raft, floating at the mercy of the wild waves and winds, does he carry his audience to the burning regions of Africa; and thence, again, to the gloomy walls of a noisome prison. His imagination travels faster than those splendid vessels which he describes so well; but the reader is never wearied by keeping pace with him.

The *Figie de Koat Van* is the best of Eugene Sue's popular romances: it is nevertheless that in which improbabilities abound the most. The interest of the tale turns upon the artifices of a villain to seduce a noble and beauteous lady, who has retained her virtue and her reputation immaculate even amidst the dissipations and luxuriousness of a voluptuous court. The Count de Vaudrey, for a wager, engages to win the love and obtain the favour of this virtuous widow; and, by a series of base arts which none but the most finished scoundrel would have practised, he succeeds in his vile scheme and triumphs over the innocent and affectionate woman who offered him her heart, her hand,

her fortune, and her charms. Now any other novelist than M. Eugene Sue, would have represented the injured woman to be successful in obtaining that deadly vengeance for which she thirsts; but in this romance, as strange in its moral as it is preposterous in its incidents, Vaudrey triumphs, and his victim perishes a wretched and unavenged woman!

Vigie de Koat Væn has one parallel work in the French language—a work too licentious to be noticed at length in this book; but a work whose terrible lessons make the hair stand on end, chill the blood in the reader's veins, harrow up his soul, and for hours—perhaps for years, after perusal, disgust him with this world and its denizens;—a work that was written by a French nobleman, and that purports to be a history of human nature;—a work; the tendency of which has been vituperated and condemned as pernicious in the extreme;—but a work which, we are fain to confess, tells a tale that is, alas! too true. We allude to *Justine, ou Les Malheurs de la Vertu*; and with these two volumes should *Vigie de Koat Væn* be bound and placed upon the shelf of the public circulating-library, or the private *bibliothèque*.

In the novels of Eugene Sue the reader must not

expect to find a series of "tough yarns" spun by old weather-beaten sailors; nor a catalogue of diabolical oaths, which shock the ear; nor a quantity of sea-slang which none but technicalists can comprehend; nor the way to bend or furl a sail; nor the names of every rope, spar, or department belonging to a ship. He must not anticipate a revolting account of a sailor's flogging; because that terrible and degrading penalty has long been abolished in the French navy,—and, would to God! it were in our's!—nor should he hope, when once introduced to the quarter-deck of M. Sue's vessels, to be surrounded by nought but tobacco-smoke, the odours of pitch, and the smell of grog. No:—M. Sue entertains his audience with love-tales whispered in a cabin, and with incidents which might as well have occurred in a suite of apartments at Paris, as on board the *Sylphide* or the *Salamandre*. But he blends the interest of the sea, and of his frigates, and his corvettes, with that of his tales; and the storm, and the naval battle, are necessary to the plan and *denouement* of his stories. And then again, his ships transport his heroes and his heroines to different climes; and afford him an opportunity of indulging in those descriptions of scenery which he paints so well. The blue water

of the Mediterranean, the vicinity of the Azores, the coast of Coromandel, the scorching climes of Africa, are all included in the map which his graphic pen has traced with more than longitudinal and latitudinal precision. At one time he is full of sentiment and kindness, like the still waters on which his vessels float at the hour of sunset; at another he is boisterous, turbulent, and rapid, like those waters and those vessels contending together beneath the influence of the storm. He is full of life, change, vivacity, and vigour; never prolix—always amusing; and compelling his readers to follow him to the end of his tale, whatever be the pressing nature of their occupations or their appointments.

To write a series of novels which really merit and support the name of naval romances, and to write them in the pleasing and inoffensive style which M. Sue has adopted, was a task of no small difficulty. To describe the habits of the coarse and uncouth in gentle language,—to gild the tarred hull of the mighty vessel,—to paint a picture of the sea, which neither shocks nor intimidates the female mind,—and yet to be true to fact and to nature, was an aim to which he aspired, and which he has successfully worked out. Be it recollected that in the incidents

of his tales, which bear no more reference to the sea on which they happened than they do to the land on which they might have happened, he is alone improbable: in description and delineation of scenery, of character, and of passion, he is correct, and his veracity is unimpeachable. There is a joyousness and a gaiety about him when he puts out to sea, which indicate the ardent ardor of that element, despite its perils and its discomfort; and his heart leaps as he sends his stately vessel forth from Brest to dare the dangers of the deep. There are times when he almost persuades his readers that a sailor's life is an enviable one, and that a ship is a pleasant and happy abode; so powerfully is his eloquence capable of working upon the mind!

Eugene Sue is in France what Captain Marryat *was* in England—the principal supporter of the naval school of novels; and in this respect only can the least degree of comparison be drawn between the two authors. His style reminds us of Cooper's most approved nautical fictions, rather than of the coarse and vulgar "yarns" so tediously spun by Captain Marryat. He introduces us to scenes and adventures of stirring and painful interest: he would resemble the most powerful of the contemporary writers of his country, did he not choose

sailors for his heroes, and ships for the stage on which his *dramatis personæ* figure to so much advantage. He is, indeed, a beautiful writer; his language resembles those gay and sunny climes of the south which he describes so well; his graphic powers approach the pre-eminence attained by Walter Scott. His description of the *Salamandre*, a corvette, in the novel which bears that name, is not excelled by Scott's delineation of Cleveland's schooner in the "Pirate," nor by that of Cooper's "Red Rover" or "Water Witch."

Marryat's novels are one mass of sea-slang from the beginning to the end; and how ladies could ever be found to read them, for understand them they could not, we are totally at a loss to conceive. But there is so little of this atrocious *patois* in the romances of Eugene Sue, that the most uninitiated in nautical technicalities may peruse them with satisfaction and delight.

His principal works, besides those we have already mentioned, are *Pluk et Plok*, *Coucaratcha*, *Attar Gull*, and *La Salamandre*; from which last-named favourite work we propose to extract a paragraph as a specimen of the author's abilities. The reader must, however, be previously informed that the *Salamandre*, which we before stated to be a

corvette in the French navy, has been wrecked on a shoal in the Mediterranean; and that the crew—amongst whom are the First Lieutenant—Pierre Huet, and his son Paul; a passenger of the name of Szaffie; a lady—Madame de Blêne, and her niece Alice, who is beloved by both Paul and Szaffie, but whose heart is tenderly devoted to the latter,—have saved themselves upon a raft constructed with empty barrels and planks.

THE RAFT.

How beautiful is the pale light of the silvery moon, when its rays are reflected upon the pure and transparent waters of a lake! But when its chaste beams are frequently concealed by dark and rapidly flying clouds, and when it appears at long intervals red and ominous like a meteor, Oh! how truly consistent is its funereal gleam with a night of storm and of despair!

And what a terrible night was that! The boiling billows, high and impetuous, and covered with white foam, commingled together in one vast whirlpool; and if at times the tempest lowered its voice of thunder, and murmured only through the hollows formed by the waves, it seemed to recover fresh vigour from that momentary repose. And then a

sharp and long whistling rent the air ; and that was succeeded by a hoarse and rumbling din which appeared to emanate from the very entrails of the earth—and upon these conflicting noises would break short and plaintive sounds which resembled the cries of human agony.

And with every wave the raft experienced a new shock ; and it spun round upon the uneven surface of that tremendous sea, for it had neither helm, nor mast, nor oars to guide it. But as the principles of its construction were such that it offered no resistance to the fury of the angry main, it would not sink : it merely succumbed beneath the force of every billow which broke over it ; and, while it was submerged for a moment, its platform was completely swept by the raging torrents.

And for five days that terrible storm had lasted ! Thus, it was no longer the gay and gallant crew of the once lively *Salamandre* that now occupied the frail raft : it was a troop of ghastly and miserable objects ! It was a number of beings without names—discoloured, cadaverous, their garments wet through and through, their long hair hanging over their shoulders, their eyes wild and glaring, their bleeding and cracked lips wreathed in hideous and mocking smiles—for during five days those emaciated

creatures had experienced the horrors of famine! They were a prey to all the imperious nature of their wants—beyond their vital instinct, all with them was as with the dead! Hunger gnawed their entrails, thirst burnt their throats: their wounds, red and painful, were rendered the more galling by the salt of the ocean that dashed over them—rage was in their breasts, curses upon their tongues. And still they clung to life—to that life, with all its agony! Arrived at such a pitch, with them suicide was impossible; for suicide is the effect of a reasoning faculty, and that faculty was lost to them!

Moreover, suicide is but little in vogue where misery and privation abound. Suicide requires sumptuous and intoxicating repasts—perfumes and women—flowers and costly wines. Suicide must concentrate in one single joy all other pleasures known or dreamt of, and fill its jewelled cup with the essence of every bliss; and then, having drained the goblet to the dregs, suicide must exclaim, "The bowl is empty. Adieu!" Then only can existence disgust, because it has brimmed over on every side.

But in the midst of miseries the most horrible—when scarcely a spark of life remains—oh! how that flickering light is cherished—watched—and

cared for, as if it were the last ember of a fire which we would not wish altogether extinguished. Thus, on board the raft, did those wretched beings cling to existence; although, to support the thirty people that survived, there were only three pounds of biscuit and a small barrel of wine.

With one accord the unhappy creatures could have put an end to that horrible state of agony. But, no—they must live—live in tears, in hatred, in torture, and in crime. And, what matter how they lived? They *did* live!

And amongst them no longer existed the distinctions of father and son—officers and subordinates—women and girls. On that miserable raft were beings who were devoured with hunger, and who, in order to eat, would attempt everything. Good luck to the strong; misery to the weak!

One man alone, however, appeared to be above the pinching wants which oppressed the others; this was Szaffie. He was still the same—calm, unmoved, and cold. Standing near the stump of the broken jury-mast, on which he leant with one hand, he tranquilly observed all that was passing around him.

At every shock occasioned by the waves, some bent their heads upon their breast, others endea-

voured to oppose the force of the billows with a feeble plank, and a few, lying on their backs in a species of lethargic indifference, with their glassy and listless eyes wide open, gnawed a piece of rope, or a glove, which hazard had thrown in their way. Some, whose legs were caught between the planks of the raft and were nearly shattered in their concussions with the waves, laughed wildly, reckless of pain. Grief and hunger had made them mad. The greater portion, standing, and huddled together in the centre of the raft, obeyed, like an inanimate mass, the oscillations of the frail platform which separated them from eternity. On one side were Paul, his father, the old Doctor Garnier, who loved the crew as if they were his own children, Alice and her aunt, and Szaffie.

A remnant of subordination had hitherto left the officers in command of the little food which was yet upon the raft. The lieutenant supported himself upon the cask of wine, and watched his son Paul, who in his turn was gazing upon Alice.

Alice, seated upon the raft with her head supported upon her emaciated arms, never took her eyes off Szaffie. Madame de Blène saw nothing, felt nothing—she was inert.

The tempest now seemed to redouble its vio-

lence ; and the raft, floating upon the mighty waves, which hurled it up to heaven and then dashed it fifty feet into an abyss beneath, was sometimes almost perpendicular in that chaos of storm and danger. It was in vain that the officers endeavoured to give the men certain orders which would enable them to resist the shocks thus occasioned by the motion of the raft. They were not listened to.

At this terrible crisis, the sailors, fancying themselves to be in danger of death, and after a few words exchanged amongst them, advanced towards the place where their superiors were standing.

"We want wine!" cried La Joie, the boatswain, brandishing an axe: "we want wine, that we may die in peace!"

Pierre Huet rose suddenly from his recumbent position over the cask, and presenting a pistol at the head of the ringleader, exclaimed, "Wretch—it is our only resource. We must economize it to the utmost of our power!"

"Ah! ha!" cried La Joie, knocking down the muzzle of the pistol. "It will not harm any one here—the powder is wet. Wine! wine!"

"Wine! wine!" shouted the sailors. "Give us the wine—or die!"

" You dare revolt!" exclaimed the lieutenant, looking round for a cutlass.

" There are no longer any officers here!" was the reply. " We are the stronger—give us the wine!"

" Never!" said the lieutenant.

" We will have it!" rejoined La Joie, advancing in a menacing way towards Pierre Hust.

Paul rushed upon him to protect his father; but the boatswain knocked the youth down with the axe; and Pierre, in an attempt to avenge his son, was wounded also. Then, covered with blood, furious, and not knowing what they did, both father and son, supported by the doctor and two faithful sailors, endeavoured to oppose the designs of the mutinous crew; but they were beaten back, and forced to succumb.

In the midst of that infernal tumult, Madame de Blène, carried by the crowd of mutinous sailors towards the edge of the raft, fell into the sea, and was borne away by the waves, vainly extending her hands to Alice for assistance. But Alice saw her aunt disappear without being able to succour her; for she was compelled to hold by an iron ring in one of the planks, to prevent herself from sharing the same fate.

"Wine! wine!" shouted La Joie, with one hand upon the cask, and the other flourishing a tin cup over his head.

"Wine! wine!" exclaimed the others. "Let us drink our last stoup, and die drunk!"

And they rushed with one accord upon the cask, which was immediately broken open and speedily emptied. Intoxication soon worked its baneful effects upon those brains which had been attenuated by want and privation; and, amidst the howling of the tempest, and the roaring of the infuriate sea, they began to chaunt strange glees in hoarse voices; and their song resembled the hymn of a madman! By the reddish light of the portentous moon, some endeavoured to dance upon the raft; but they tottered at every step, and then, blinded by ebriety, fell upon the spars, rolled here and there for some moments, and at length disappeared in the surrounding billows without uttering a single cry!

The Parisian—such was the nick-name given to one of the sailors by his comrades—suddenly espied Alice crouched up by the empty barrel, and desperately clinging with one hand to the iron ring, while with the other she supported her once lovely head.

"There—drink," cried the Parisian, who was

thoroughly intoxicated: "drink—I say!"—and he placed the tin cup to the lips of the young girl.

"Alice drank with avidity every drop that remained in the cup; and her countenance became flushed with a sudden glow.

"You begin to look pretty again," cried the Parisian. "So for my trouble, you may as well permit me—"

"And the inebriate wretch with his foul lips imprinted a kiss upon the mouth of Alice; and the young girl, as she scarcely pushed him aside, exclaimed, "Oh! that wine has done me so much good! I am still thirsty: give me more—Oh! give me more!"

"Paul," said Szaffie, "look there!"—and he pointed towards Alice and the sailor. "Do you see that?"—then leaning towards the unhappy youth, who was suffering with the blow inflicted by La Joie, he added, "It is as I thought. Such is human nature! Dost thou now believe in innate virtue—in innate modesty? Oh! no—rest assured that subordination, chastity, devotion, love—and all the fine feelings that congregate in the breast of man—all, all yield to the irresistible influence of hunger and thirst. Noble sentiments, which depend upon such ignoble wants!"

Paul did not hear all that Szaffie whispered to him: he was absorbed in his own misfortunes, and those of his father.

"Oh! you shall hear me—you shall not swoon away ere I have done speaking!" cried Szaffie, with a demoniac smile; and he poured some cordial, which he had about him, into the youth's mouth.

"Oh! pity me—pity me—add not fresh horrors to this already too terrible scene!" exclaimed Paul, recovering his senses.

"I am your saviour, child!" said Szaffie. "Eat—eat!" and having cautiously opened the red portfolio which he had brought with him from the wreck, and which was supposed to contain papers, he took from thence a piece of solid meat-substance, and gave it to Paul.

Paul carried it greedily to his lips: then, after a moment of sublime reflection, he stopped, broke it into three little pieces, and dragged himself towards his father. Alice was too far off:—he had not strength enough to crawl up to her.

Two days after, the tempest was entirely calmed. The sky was blue—the air pure—and the sun rose gorgeously from his palace in the eastern main.

The wine was all gone—the biscuit crushed under foot or spoilt by the salt water—and the

miserable creatures upon the raft were fain to crunch hats, shoes, and ropes. Some had, in their ebriate madness, drank the salt water with avidity. Others put nails and little pieces of lead into their mouths, with the hope that the metallic moisture would abrogate a portion of their thirst. A sailor was slain in a dispute relative to a leathern waistband which each wanted to possess. The old Doctor Garnier was killed to supply food for the famished crew: he died in cursing those whom he used to call his children. The Parisian was drawn in a lottery to decide who should be the next victim! But this execrable food only served to abridge the existence of those who partook of it.

With difficulty could two or three sailors, besides Szaffie, maintain themselves upon their feet. They kept their eyes intently fixed upon the horizon, and watched its vapoury boundary with the most painful anxiety.

"A sail! a sail!" was the feeble cry that suddenly issued from the lips of those wretched men.

Szaffie in particular watched the spot where the sail appeared with the utmost attention; for he himself began to entertain the most dire apprehensions. At the moment when the *Salamandre* struck, he had provided himself with his writing-

case, in which he placed a substance exceedingly nourishing, and concentrated in a very small space.* Up to this moment he had therefore escaped the tortures of hunger: but his means of existence diminished; and he lost all hope of seeing the raft cast upon the African coast by the currents, for the wind had impelled it afar from land. It was therefore with an expression of joy that he exclaimed, "A sail! a sail!"

That magic word—"A sail!"—was echoed by even the lips of the dying. Glazing eyes recovered a gleam of lost fire—the wounded rose with difficulty—and every glance was directed towards the spot indicated by Szaffie. Others joined their hands together—many burst out into loud and wild shouts of laughter—and a few were so happy as to shed tears in profusion! For a moment grief was dumb—hunger appeased—and thirst quenched! Hope eradicated every sentiment of hatred; and all unkind feelings were banished by the thought that succour was at hand. And then those men, lately so fierce—so cruel—so terrible, rushed into each other's arms,

* Venison, mashed into a paste, and dried with sugar. The Indians, in their long hunting excursions, carry no other food. An ounce a day is sufficient for a man even in a strong state of health.

shook each other's hands, and gave vent to the most unfeigned joy.

Paul and his father exchanged a significant glance, and indulged in a long and fervent embrace. And Alice, poor girl! sate dozing near the ring which it was not any longer necessary for her to hold, as the sea was now calm; but she understood not the meaning of the joyous shout, "A sail!" Alas—poor child!

And the sail gradually became more distinct; and at length a large frigate was discernible in the horizon, its white canvass reflecting the rays of the effulgent sun. Oh! how delicious was that moment—when all doubt disappeared—and when that sign of safety was welcomed by the enfeebled voices of the suffering crew! The sailors, who had before mutinied and blasphemed, now felt a species of religious gratitude steal into their breasts: their lacerated hearts could not contain so exceeding a joy; and they experienced the necessity of pouring forth their souls in prayer and thanksgiving. Their burning eyes were moistened with tears:—it was a sublime picture, those men—pale—emaciated—and suffering—joining their hands together to thank God for so unexpected a relief! And the frigate drew nearer—and nearer towards the raft.

"We shall leave the raft in the manner prescribed by the articles of war in cases of shipwreck," said the lieutenant, mechanically resuming the reins of discipline.

"Yes—yes, lieutenant!" cried the sailors with one joyous accord.

"The lady first," continued Pierre Huet;—"then the cabin-boys—thirdly, the midshipman and the passengers—next, the sailors—and lastly, myself and my son."

"You never will be able to climb on board without the help of the accommodation-ladder," said Paul to his father, with a cunning smile.

"My dear child," returned the fond parent, "I know not what secret voice told me that we should not be separated yet awhile. And in sooth! heaven could not part us; for I implored its aid often enough for thee, my boy—Oh! I prayed for thy safety night and day! And heaven never abandons those who pray with sincerity; as this unlooked-for aid must prove to you."

"My mother has often said the same," replied the affectionate young man, kissing his father's cheek with tenderness and reliance on all he had affirmed.

"Heavens!" cried Szaffie at this moment, in

a tone of deep emotion and alarm: "what does that mean?" he added—as he pointed out the frigate to a sailor who was occupied in preparations for a speedy departure from the raft.

"She can't bear down upon us, Sir," replied the man; "but as the tide will—Oh!—no—no—"

And the man screamed like an infant disappointed in its desire to possess some toy.

"Rage—hell—damnation!" ejaculated Szaffie, suddenly stamping his foot with violence upon the planks beneath him.

"What is the matter?" demanded Pierre Huet.

"She has not seen us," returned Szaffie, in a voice of thunder, his eyes flashing fire, and his teeth grinding against each other. "Ah! ha! my fine singers of psalms—heaven never deserts those who pray—eh?"—and the irony of that man pierced like a dagger to every heart.

"Oh! it is impossible!" cried the lieutenant.

It was, however, too true. The frigate luffed, and was speedily out of sight. So long as even the faintest outline of its sails was perceptible upon the horizon, the occupants of the raft would not give up all hope: they could not—dared not believe that destiny, or fate, or heaven could have prepared for them so atrocious a mockery!

But when the vessel had entirely disappeared—when nothing but the sun glanced on the waters of the Mediterranean, calm and deserted—Oh! it was then that the horrors of their situation were felt in all their acuteness—all their poignancy! And, as is the case in all moral or physical reactions, a state of torpor—of feebleness—of incapacity, succeeded to that predicament of exaltation and of joy.

This prostration of the nerves lasted some minutes;—that length of time appeared to be necessary for those wretched men to precipitate themselves from the eminence of sanguine hope to the depths of the darkest despair. When the horrors of their situation were again felt in all their intensity—when they once more saw themselves face to face with the most awful of deaths—and when (the sky, the sea, and the horizon being without a speck) these terrible convictions rushed to the heart of each, cold and piercing like the bite of a dying man,—Oh! then what a dread commingling of oaths and prayers, blasphemies and supplications, and cries of rage and of death, ascended to that heaven which a few minutes before had been so sincerely invoked by all! And then, also, those, who ere now had embraced each other, felt the sentiments of hatred, and the pangs of hunger, more acutely

than before; and the wretched mortals, to avenge their miseries, as it were, upon each other, rushed in wild tumult together, and fought with exasperation and frenzy.

Szaffie also uttered a terrible cry, which was wrung from him by an acute pain, and fell senseless upon the raft. For one of the famished creatures was endeavouring to cut a morsel of flesh from his leg!

On the following morning, this access of frenzied rage had passed away—and hunger had once more stifled every other feeling. Pierre and his son were lying close to each other—their tottering reason seemed to be ready to abandon them—everything appeared to turn round, as if they were under the influence of wine.

“Paul,” said Pierre, in a faint and hollow voice, “I am very hungry. Have you no more of that meat which you gave me yesterday morning?”

“It was Szaffie’s,” returned Paul.

“Has he any more?” demanded the lieutenant.

“I think he must have,” was the reply.

“Let us take it from him by force,” said Pierre.

And they both dragged themselves towards Szaffie, who appeared to be motionless. Pierre placed one knee upon his stomach and held a dagger

to his throat, while Paul rifled his pockets. The red box was speedily found, and opened.

"Give it to me," cried the father to his son.

"Wait a moment," exclaimed Paul.

"No—no—give it to me," persisted the famished sire.

"It is mine," said the son to the father, breaking off a piece of the small remaining portion of the comestible, and carrying it to his lips.

"I will have it—or—"

And Pierre rushed upon his offspring with a wild howl and a savage look.

A terrible struggle ensued, and Szaffie recovered from his swoon.

"Oh! you have robbed me, and you wished to assassinate me!" cried Szaffie, in a feeble voice. "You see, Paul," he added, as the father and son continued to wrestle together, "that the poniard must decide between you two. Now—parricide—now, infanticide—and all for a mouthful of food! Ha! ha!"

The night soon put an end to that scene of horror; and on the following morning Szaffie, awakening out of a heavy and deep sleep, fancied that he had been under the influence of a night-mare.

It was mid-day. The vertical sun darted his hot

rays upon the placid waters of the Mediterranean, on which the raft was almost motionless. The fragile rampart of barrels, casks, and netting had been broken; and the actual platform alone remained upon that ocean which was now smooth and polished as a mirror. Here and there floated the remnants of garments, of cordage, and of planks, on which the sun shone gaily and gorgeously. The sailors, who survived, were all stretched upon the raft, their eyes brilliant, their lips red, their countenances flushed, animated, and resplendent. Only, instead of that soft and penetrating heat which their external appearance seemed to indicate, they were bathed in a cold sweat, and their members were stiff and iced. Except this phenomenon and a nervous *tic* which gave a singular and awful expression to every countenance, nothing bespoke the long torture to which they had been exposed. For some began to arrange their jackets, pull down their shirt sleeves, and tie their cravats, and exclaimed, "The lieutenant is going to commence the inspection: we must be decent and clean!" Others fancied that they saw in the distance a city resplendent with gold, and marble, and verdure; and they said, "That is Smyrna!"

"We are arrived, then," observed one. "O

God! how lovely is that prospect. There are the domes—and the harbour—and the orange-trees : and there are fair women who beckon to us.”

And then they who laboured under this delusion, took each other's arms to advance towards the city, and falling from the raft into the sea, they sank to rise no more, save as disfigured and inanimate corpses. The waters rippled for a moment—and the ocean became still and tranquil as before.

Similar delusions continued with those who were left. Some commenced a gay waltz to celebrate their near approach to land: alas! the dance was commenced upon the raft and finished in the waters. Others fancied that they were in the cottages where they were born, surrounded by their wives and children, and all that was dear to them. And they melted into tears—and they blessed their offspring—and promised their wives to tempt the dangers of the ocean no more!

But all this was done with a smile upon the lips, or with tears in their eyes, as circumstances seemed to suggest: it was an illusion which was expressed by voices so convincing and so natural, that a blind man would have taken those aberrations of fever for undoubted realities!

At the sight of this horrible drama, Szaffie was

stupified with silent horror. He and Paul were now the only two that retained their faculties unimpaired. And therefore was it with the most terrible emotion that they perceived Alice rise with an almost supernatural force from the place where she had hitherto remained seated. She was emaciated and haggard; but her eyes shone with supernatural lustre—her cheeks were suffused in a scarlet hue—and her lips were red as if they were dyed with gore.

She advanced towards Szaffie: Paul concealed his face in his hands.

“O Szaffie,” said Alice in a tender and touching tone of voice, “you are mine—my lover—my adored one!”

Paul endeavoured to withdraw to another part of the raft: but his feet and hands refused to aid him to drag himself away.

“I thought I loved Paul, poor fellow,” continued Alice: “but I only looked upon him as a brother—that was all! But you—oh! you, Szaffie,—you are my lover,” she continued with pride; “and every look of your’s is for me a pleasure and a torment at the same time. Oh! your caresses—since that day, when almost in the very face of death, I gave myself entirely up to thee—those caresses

have made too deep an impression upon me ever to be abrogated! From that day, my life has been one long—long pleasure; for your kisses—they are still upon my lips!”

“Oh! let me die,” ejaculated Paul in a tone of voice that pierced to the very heart of those who heard him, madmen as they were.

“Who speaks of death?” cried Alice, gazing wildly around her. “To live with you, Szaffie—to live with you, is my only hope. Come, Szaffie, come—my aunt is dead as well as my father and my mother—as well as all the rest of the world for me! Come, then, I am thine, Szaffie. This is our blue curtain,” she continued, pointing to the sky; “that is my white bed,” she added, indicating the ocean; “and on every side are the flowers that you love! Come, my love—for I am thine—and thou art mine. What matters the scorn of the world to me? I can say to thee, without asking the permission of a soul, ‘Thou art mine!’ For thou art my world, Szaffie.”

The eyes of Szaffie sparkled as she spoke.

“Now let my long hair float wildly upon the winds,” continued the unfortunate girl, pretending to disengage her tresses from the large comb which confined them. “That long hair, Szaffie, which

you loved so much—that long dark hair—Oh! let it float over my shoulders. And now, my love—my Szaffie—come—hasten—I go before thee—and shall wait in the bridal chamber. Oh, come!”

And the poor girl beckoned Szaffie to follow her—and she hastened towards the edge of the raft, as if she would endeavour to walk upon the surface of the sea—and she sank in the deep abyss of waters below.

Paul gave vent to a terrible cry, and stretched out his hands, as if that useless movement would save her.

“ Monster!” he exclaimed. “ Not one single effort to recover her!”

Her last word was “ Szaffie!”

“ She dies happy in her illusions,” said that individual in a hoarse voice, while a tear stood upon his eye-lash.

“ Alice! Alice! My father—father—Alice!” cried Paul, wringing his hands, a prey to the most acute agony.

CHAPTER IV.

FREDERIC SOULIE.

TURN we now to that young and successful writer, who descends into the vault of the dead, and snatches the cold corse from the tomb, to introduce it into his tale; who calls in the assistance of plague and fire to add fresh horrors to his romance; and who delights more in the violated sanctuary of Death than in the splendour and gaiety of the drawing-room. Turn we to him who has revived the midnight terrors, the phantoms, the robbers, the murderers, the executioners, and the violaters of virgin innocence, that were wont to dwell in the legends of the olden time, or in the folios of a German library; whose patrons were Maturin,

Lewis, and Ratcliffe; and whose readers were timid school-girls and affrighted nursery-maids. Turn we to him who has regenerated that school of horror which had nearly exploded within the last dozen years;—yes, let us turn to him whose favourite subjects are those which we have dreaded to think of at night in the days of our childhood.

The writer of an ordinary novel may possess a weak, pusillanimous, and feeble mind, and yet produce an amusing tale. His book may be called a good one; and he himself may pass as a man of talent and capacity. But the author of a romance, in which the feelings are most painfully interested by deeds of blood, vengeance, rape, and horror, must own a powerful mind, a vivid imagination, and a fertile brain; or else his lucubrations will be vain and futile. His murders must not to be told with the coolness of a newspaper-report: they must seem as if they were written in letters of blood themselves. The very page, which narrates their tale, must be surveyed with awe and a species of pleasing and fascinating abhorrence—if the reader can comprehend the antithesis—which create much more than a common interest in the mind. The romance-writer must indulge in nothing puerile: no tame nor vapid description will be par-

doned in him: his work must be all fire, all vigour, all energy, and capable of producing a species of electric interest throughout.

Such is the system of M. Frederic Soulié, exemplified in his *Deux Cadavres*. This awe-inspiring romance, which seems as if it had been written in a charnel-house, by the light of those flickering candles that in Catholic countries surround the corse, and by an iron pen dipped in human gore, is the most extraordinary creation of the brain that was ever yet, in the guise of a historical tale, presented to the world. Let the superstitious and the timid beware of it: they would not forget its terrible incidents for many a long night, after they had once perused it. It is a romance which haunts its reader as a man is haunted by the phantom of the victim whom he has slain: it is a book so full of horrors—and all those horrors so natural and so probable—not once exaggerated by the assistance of powers summoned from beyond the tomb—that he, who reads it, lays it aside with the impression that such things might have been, and interrogates himself whether he be just awakened from a nightmare dream, or whether he have witnessed a series of terrible realities.

The scene is laid in England; and the epoch

of the tale is the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell. The work commences with the execution of Charles the First, which is described with painful accuracy. This is the first horror. Then come the desecration of a grave in Westminster Abbey—the parade of a corpse through the streets of London—the hideous ceremony of presenting a jug of beer to the motionless lips of the dead thing, as the procession moves up the Poultry—the visit of two adventurous men to the chapel in Windsor Castle at midnight—the exhuming of a coffin—the circumstance of one of those men putting his hand to the dead body which that coffin contained, and finding by the dissevered head that it was the corse of the late King—the journey through dark and dismal roads with that coffin upon a sledge drawn by dogs—the rape of a beautiful girl by her lover in an hour of madness—the progress of the plague—murders, duels, riots, and deaths—and then the horrid agonies endured by that young girl, who lingered through all the stages of starvation, tied to a tree, till she wasted away, expired, and was found a fleshless skeleton some time afterwards! This is the brief analysis of *Les Deux Cadavres*: this is the frame-work of the book upon which was built the reputation of M. Frederic Soulié.

Un Été à Meudon is an assemblage of tales, some humorous—others tragic and sentimental. Napoleon, and the son of that great man—the one misused by jealous and timid England—the other enslaved by proud, and despotic Austria—are enthusiastically admired by Soulié. We have also in this collection a Russian tale, of which, however, the less that is said the better.

The language of Frederic Soulié is perfect—his style has not a single fault: his ideas alone may occasionally be deemed preposterous, and his incidents too highly coloured. He occasionally forgets the maxim of his inimitable fellow-countryman—De Rochefoucault; “*Le plus vrai n'est pas toujours le plus vraisemblable* ;” but he maintains so intense an interest throughout his plot, that the reader forgets to criticise as he proceeds. His most important works besides *Les Deux Cadavres*, are *Le Vicomte de Beziers*, *Le Magnetiseur*, and *Le Comte de Toulouse*—his best is *L'Été à Meudon*. And it is from this last that we propose to extract our specimen of Soulié's powers and ability. The legend is wild and singular—it will, however, be perused with deep interest.

THE PARK-GATE.

About twenty years ago the house of M. de Leurtaal was celebrated for the brilliancy of its *fêtes* and parties. Contrary to the established custom, it was neither in Paris nor in the winter-time that these festivities took place. M. de Leurtaal possessed a beautiful mansion in the vicinity of Auteuil, and thither were invited the most celebrated people of the day. Amongst those who assiduously sought the society of M. de Leurtaal, at this period, was the Count de W——, an individual who had attained a considerable degree of military reputation, and who was also well known as a man of intellect and information. Indeed, his fashionable education was superintended and completed by certain ladies—especially those who flourished in the time of the Directory, and who distributed a portion of their own foppery to many an ill-bred clown—and thus was the Count de W—— considered a polished gentleman. It is not necessary to describe the nature of that passion which he speedily entertained for Madame de Leurtaal—nor the particulars of the early stage of their reciprocal affection: let us hasten to detail that event which is so intimately connected with the title of our tale.

One morning—it was scarcely two o'clock; and although in the summer season, darkness prevailed around—a window was noiselessly opened at one of the angles of M. de Leurtaal's mansion, and a man descended from it more noiselessly still. A female's anxious glances followed him from that casement; and when the object of her solicitude had reached the ground in safety, she made him a sign of tenderness and satisfaction. Mr. de W——, for it was he, acknowledged the sweet token of adieu, and hastily retreated amongst the labyrinths of shrubs and trees that surrounded the house. Amelie—such was the name of Madame de Leurtaal—did not leave the window until she had suffered the necessary time to elapse to enable the Count to reach the park-gate. She then retired; but whether the hinges of the wicket had creaked on their pivots—whether the gate itself had been shut with less care than usual—or whether it was the cry of a human being—Madame de Leurtaal knew not: it was, however, certain that an unaccustomed noise fell upon her ears. She hastily opened her window, and listened once more; but she heard nothing farther to excite her alarms; and the deep silence that ensued entirely calmed her terrors. The daylight dawned—and at length the breakfast-

hour arrived. Madame de Leurtaal descended to the dining-room to do the honours of the table to her husband and the numerous guests who were staying at the house ; and, as usual, the conversation was lively and gay ; the principal topic of discourse being the ball which was to be given that very evening in honour of Madame de Leurtaal's birthday. Every one was prepared to be amiable and agreeable upon so interesting an occasion ; when suddenly the gardener, whose name was Antoine, rushed wildly into the apartment, giving vent to the violence of his feelings in loud and hasty exclamations.

" Oh ! my God—my God !" cried he : " what have I found ? We are all done for, now ; everything will be laid waste throughout the country ! Yes—Sir—the robbers have entered the park ; but whether they be Jacobins—republicans—or highwaymen, I scarcely know !"

" Who has dared enter my inclosures ?" demanded M. de Leurtaal, interrupting the ejaculations of Antoine.

" Who has dared to enter your park, Sir ?" repeated Antoine, vehemently ; " who has dared ? Why—assassins, Sir—villains—robbers—with false keys that open the wicket next to the wood."

Amelie felt that her cheeks lost all their colour at this moment. But Antoine cried so lustily that the attention of every one was directed towards him. M. de Leurta! again stopped him in the midst of his incongruous lamentations, and demanded what had happened to occasion so extraordinary an ebullition of woe?

"Behold, Sir!" cried the unfortunate gardener, now almost angry: "behold what I have discovered!"

And with these words he drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and threw two fingers, horribly smashed and mutilated, upon the table before his master. Every one present drew back in unfeigned horror, while Amelie uttered a loud shriek; but in a moment she recollected that her own happiness and that of her lover depended upon her prudence; and she accordingly succeeded in mastering her feelings. During the silence which succeeded the cry of horror that had escaped the lips of Madame de Leurta! at the sight of the bloody members lying upon the table, the gardener had had time to continue his clamorous narrative.

"Yes, Sir," said Antoine, in a loud voice—"they were caught in the Park-gate; and that which proves that the thing was done by robbers, and that

the rogues were numerous, is the fact that the wicket had only smashed the fingers, and that they were cut off afterwards with a knife. It is not possible that one man could have courage enough to operate in so terrible a manner upon himself."

M. de Leurthal examined the fingers with gloomy looks and deep attention; and then suddenly glancing hastily round the room, without fixing his eye upon any one in particular, he said, with a bitter smile, "The skin of these mangled fingers is very white, and those nails are kept in too good order to be those of a robber. Is not such your opinion, ladies?"

Every one of these words fell like scorching drops of boiling lead upon the heart of Amelie! Her teeth chattered—she felt that her brain whirled, and that her eyes became dim; but the various opinions which M. de Leurthal's question called forth from the guests present at the breakfast-table, created too much confusion to allow her emotions to be perceived. The indignation of her friends concealed the shame of Amelie. Presently, M. de Leurthal, having uttered a sort of half-apology to his guests, demanded of Antoine if the traces of blood that were left afforded any particular ground of suspicion,

"Impossible," replied the gardener: "they stop at the foot of the wicket."

"And you have discovered nothing more?" continued M. de Leurta!;—"nothing that can put us upon the right scent, as it were—no fragment of a garment—no riding-whip—nor key—or any thing, in fine, which the wounded man may have let fall?"

"No, Sir—no—I have found nothing," replied the gardener. "But another fact, which proves that the villains were numerous,—or rather,—that there were more than one,—is that the knife, which cut off the fingers, was wiped upon a piece of paper—a thing that no wounded man could think of doing. This is the paper I allude to."

"Give it to me!" cried M. de Leurta! hastily; and he anxiously seized upon the bloody paper which Antoine handed to him.

He examined it long and attentively; and during his investigation, while every one was silently gazing upon the host, Amelie could hear her heart beating in her breast. Suddenly M. de Leurta! raised his eyes towards her, and said, without exhibiting even the most remote suspicion, "If you examine this, you will think as I do. Here is the mark where the blade was wiped; and the trace clearly proves that the amputation was performed

with a flat poniard, and not with a common knife."

"Exactly what it is!" shouted Antoine. "Those brigands always carry poniards—the villains—the ruffians—the murderers!"

M. de Leurtaal ordered his domestic to leave the room, while Amelie took the paper, and mechanically passed it to her right-hand neighbour so soon as she had glanced cursorily over it. This individual scrutinized it with the utmost curiosity, and again awoke the slumbering terrors of the wretched Amelie by crying, "Yes—there is something written beneath this blood!"

"Let me see it—let me see it!" exclaimed M. de Leurtaal, his eyes flashing fire, and his voice almost choked with emotion.

The paper was passed to him once more, and after a great deal of difficulty, he gradually decyphered these words:—"Monsieur and Madame de Leurtaal have the honour to invite—"

He stopped; the paper was torn just *there*.

The syllables of this phrase, thus seen through the bloody traces, sounded like the call of Death in the ears of Amelie. M. de Leurtaal crushed the paper in his hands with terrible violence; and, now for the first time giving vent to the tempest that raged within him, he addressed his wife in a fierce

tone, and said, "Tis well! This evening we shall see which of our guests will be missing!"

He hastily left the room, followed by his friends in a state of moody and suspicious silence. Amelie remained alone behind—and for the first time was she now enabled to examine the terrible object of accusation. She gazed upon it, and—so well is each beautiful feature of a lover registered in the tablet of his mistress's memory—she speedily recognised those fair fingers and those faultless nails which had also struck her husband. She recognised them—she was alone—and she secured the sad relic!

But, Oh! this was not all the devotion of the noble Count to the honour of his mistress! To mutilate himself—was terrible! but that which he subsequently did, was far more chivalrous still.

It were impossible to depict the misery—the agony—the despair that rent the bosom of Madame de Leurthal throughout that unhappy day! Years—long, long years of woe were outdone by that single day of bitterness—of reckless project—and of unutterable distress! A vain hope—ever attendant upon those cases where the result of misfortune is not yet known—occasionally penetrated to her wounded soul. The sense of her duties, and the

necessity of attending to her domestic avocations, also came to her assistance; and she thus partially soothed her agitated mind.

In the evening she appeared in the drawing-room, resplendent and calm! In proportion as the hour of danger advanced, she felt that she gradually became more tranquil. Instead of suffering her misfortune to gain upon her step by step, she calculated its full extent in her imagination: she knew that the lapse of a few minutes would decide her fate—her dishonour and her death; and she was prepared for so great a catastrophe.

The entertainment commenced, and the guests arrived in crowds. M. de Leurthal, stationed at a little distance from the door, affected to receive them with a degree of politeness which permitted him to count and examine all who passed him. The hour advanced, and M. de W—— did not make his appearance: a few other fashionables of the day were also late. Madame de Leurthal was at that period sufficiently beautiful to excite the desires of more than one, and to receive an universal show of homage, so that the suspicions of her husband might, after all, remain undecided and dubious. The festival continued, and some of the expected guests were still wanting; but they were

only ladies or old men—not one on whom suspicion could fall, save M. de W——. Amelie was aware of this; and her husband whispered in her ears, as she passed by the place where he was posted, “The circle of my suspicions gradually becomes smaller: it now includes but three names—and already might I select one, and convince myself that Monsieur de——”

At the moment when M. de Leurthal was about to pronounce the fatal name, the drawing-room door was thrown quickly open, and a lacquey announced the Count de W——. Monsieur and Madame de Leurthal were each so anxious to devour him with a look, that neither perceived the disorder which was pictured upon each other’s countenances. But the appearance of the Count excited far different sentiments in the breasts of his entertainers. M. de W—— came carelessly forward, with his opera-hat under his arm, playing with his shirt-frill with one hand, and dangling his watch-chain with the other—both being covered with milk-white gloves.

“Ah! it is not he, then!” thought Monsieur and Madame de Leurthal both at the same moment.

“It is not he whom I must suspect,” said the

husband, feeling himself suddenly embarrassed and ashamed.

"It is not he who was wounded!" said Amelie within herself.

Oh! from that moment how everything was changed in her eyes! The magnitude of the danger, which menaced her, was diminished—her lover was safe—and her agonies of soul were abrogated. These ideas raised her spirits to such a height that had not M. de Leurta! been occupied in waiting for other guests who did not come, he would have read the truth in the joyous glances of his wife. Several times, when M. de W—— passed near her, he spoke with that ease and elegance of which he was the model. The ball progressed—and Amelie was relieved of all her fears.

In the course of the evening, according to the custom of the times, the company present proposed to dance a gavot. The most distinguished people in the room were called upon to figure in this dance; so that M. de W—— soon found himself placed as the *vis-à-vis* of Madame de Leurta!. Amelie was in ecstasies at the prospect of being enabled to receive and return the courteous smiles of her lover, and to press the hand so freely ten-

dered in the prescribed mazes of the dance. Her heart felt lighter than it ever before had seemed; and even if a remnant of dread had lurked in her mind, it would have fled at the sight of the ease and grace with which M. de W—— acquitted himself in the gavot, and by which he attracted the attention of all the spectators present. In one of the figures, when the rapidity of the Terpsichorean movements concealed every expression of any passion or particular feeling, Amelie suffered herself to squeeze her lover's hand, as if to felicitate him upon a joy which she supposed he could not comprehend. At that moment a terrible shriek re-echoed around the room—

Reader, it did not emanate from M. de W—— !

—It escaped from the lips of the unhappy Amelie; for she had felt, as she pressed her lover's hand, the fingers of cotton, so skilfully prepared, yield to her touch, while he was unaware that she had thus intended to convey a token of her esteem.

On the following morning a dreadful fever seized upon Madame de Leurta!; and every morning did M. de W—— call to enquire after her health, thus evincing his tenderness to the last. At the expiration of a week, he departed to join the army—carrying his secret with him !

Monsieur and Madame de Leurthal were shortly after informed that, having been dreadfully wounded in an engagement where he exposed himself with uncalled-for rashness, he was obliged to undergo a shocking operation. On his return, he had lost an arm.

“Heavens!” exclaimed Madame de Leurthal, so soon as she saw him alone, and for the first time;—
“what have you done?”

“The most prudent thing I could do,” was the calm and tranquil reply.

CHAPTER V.

DE LAMARTINE.

IF the attractions of any art can cause the soul of man to feel itself suddenly lifted afar from the grosser joys of earth, and wrapped in a species of blissful delirium—it is poetry. If there be any author who has complete power over the minds of his readers, to enchain them in the mystic bonds that his effusions cast around them, and actually to implicate them and their feelings, their sympathies, and their passions, in the scenes that he depicts in glowing colours—it is the poet. He is like an enchanter, who, with a magic wand, can make works of imagination appear facts, and give an air of reality to fables, so that the pleasure which the reader

experiences rather resembles a long unwearied dream of delight than the effect of a certain operation premeditated, undertaken, and pursued when awake. And such a poet is De Lamartine.

To say that he is the greatest of living poets is certainly his due ; and to affirm that he is equal to Byron, is not to hazard too dangerous an opinion. His poetry is all soul and sentiment, and religion. In his *Méditations Poétiques* he commits to paper a variety of random thoughts and reflections, just as they occurred to him, and, as he writes, he seems unaware that he is composing the finest verses which grace the modern literature of his country. When he prays to his God in those sweet strains, which, if the Almighty really listen to the supplications and thanks of men, could not fail to be acceptable at the throne of eternal grace, he gathers together the most brilliant ideas, and weaves them into a soft, melancholy, and plaintive language, which he pours forth to him whom he was taught from infancy to adore. These holy aspirations bear unimpeachable evidence to the deep religious fervour which is seated in the mind of this great poet, and show at the same time, that if he had never read the Bible, he never would have shone as the most eminent bard of the day. Religion

made De Lamartine a poet; but instead of inspiring him with fanatic and gloomy notions, and divesting his lips of smiles, and quenching the fire of his eye, it taught him to worship his God with gladness as frequently as in plaintive measures, and to depict in happy and glowing colours the goodness and the munificence of the Majesty of heaven.

The *Voyage en Orient* is a brilliant combination of golden verses and gorgeous flowers—glittering like the magnificence or the natural beauties of the east—and displaying to the imagination of the reader a splendid picture of all the glories and attractions of the universe concentrated into one focus. The loveliness of oriental women, with their long hair flowing over ivory shoulders, their faultless features, their bright complexions, their sunny eyes, their voluptuous bosoms, and their elastic forms, are as highly and as often eulogised in the verse of De Lamartine as the beauties of the country or of the heavens. M. De Lamartine worships his Maker through that Maker's works; and when he gazes upon the faultless persons of those Asiatic women, whose charms embellish his verse, it is not with the eye of desire that he surveys them; but he dwells on their attractions with the same enthusiasm and the same holy admiration as when occu-

pied in the contemplation of a lovely spot in inanimate Nature. The girl, with her naked legs encircled by bracelets, and with all the riches of her breast revealed to view by the loose vesture which only partially concealed her form, was to De Lamartine but as another instance and living example of the wisdom and might of his God, who had created that fascinating being also. As she sate at the entrance of the grotto, he was struck with awe and admiration at the sweetness of that perfect specimen of God's handy-work; and his sentiments were purely and chastely expressed in the immortal book which that pilgrimage to the East gave to France and to Europe.

But as it will be impossible to attempt to lay any elaborate extract from De Lamartine's works before our readers, we shall select, for dissection and review, one of the most popular poems, and by so doing endeavour to furnish an idea of the extent and nature of that genius which all, who comprehend it, must admire. The work we allude to is *Jocelyn*;—a book, which exemplifies something so pleasing and yet so touching—so holy, and yet so melancholy—in the manner in which it is written, and something so elevated in the thoughts, the metaphors, and the ideas, which abound in brilliancy

and in numbers throughout the pages, that we recur to it upon this occasion with feelings of the most unfeigned delight.

JOCELYN.

Jocelyn is an episode—it is not an entire poem. Even if the work were completed, and if the fragment, as it now stands, were connected as two books with ten others in the same style, the whole would not be entitled to the name of an “Epic Poem.” We do not mean to say that *Jocelyn*, on the ground of its own merits, is unworthy of being considered an epic composition; for the word “epic” has a peculiar and singular meaning; nor that De Lamartine is incapable of achieving that summit of all poetic emulation, nor that he would be forced to remain on the sides of Mount Helicon or Parnassus, without ever arriving at the summit, even if he had tried thereto to climb. No; but the style, the incidents, and the arrangements of this episode, totally preclude the possibility of coupling it with that word, whose definition is particular.

Lamartine informs us in his preface, that as he intended at the commencement of the book to extend it at some future period, and as that extension would embrace the incidents, the subjects, and the

style of *Jocelyn*, he preferred sending forth this episode of his intended work at present, in order to prepare the way for the remainder, or to furnish materials for the lucrubrations of some other poet, who might take upon himself the completion or an imitation of the original ideas. But no one was bold enough to publish, if he were to write, the remaining six books to be filled up of Spenser's "Faërie Queene;" and should M. De Lamartine be prevented from fulfilling his hopes and his anticipations in this work, we fear that it will for ever remain a fragment.

From the prologue we gather the origin of the tale. The author had a friend who lived in an enviable solitude, and who occupied his time chiefly in taking care of his flocks that wandered with him amongst the mountains. One morning the author ascended the hills, as was his wont, to visit his venerable acquaintance, and was surprised not to see him in his accustomed haunts---

"For, 'twas the hour, when, free from ev'ry care,
The holy hermit pour'd to heaven his prayer;
And tow'rds the cottage as I nearer drew,
That, which was wonder first, to terror grew;
For, from the chimney, curling to the sky,
No smoke, as usual, met my anxious eye;

And then, while yet the sun had not repos'd
In Thetis' lap, the lattices were closed.
A shudder came upon me, as the blast
A transient ruffling o'er the waves may cast ;
Still, without vainly yielding to my woe,
I hastened on with step no longer slow."

The author entered the cottage, and encountered the old servant Martha in the little parlour. By her his fears were confirmed—his friend was no more. He ascended the stairs, and entered the chamber of death. On the bed was stretched the venerable deceased.

" Calm was his visage, placid was his mien,
His cheek unruffled as it e'er had been ;
And on his tranquil countenance was shed
A ray that seemed to tell he was not dead ;
And the faint smile, which curled his lip ere he
Had left the earth to seek eternity,
Still lingered—happy sign that envious death
Used but small effort to withdraw his breath !"

When the funeral obsequies were completed, the author questioned the old servant as to the domestic habits of the deceased, and whether he ever amused himself with writing. A reply in the affirmative led to farther interrogation, and at length a number of manuscripts were discovered in the loft. The

contents of those papers formed the tale of *Jocelyn*, which Lamartine in his preface declares to be "almost a recital of facts, and not an ideal narrative accidentally entering into his thoughts."

The tale opens with the noble sacrifice of a brother's worldly prospects to secure a happy marriage for his sister. The resignation of *Jocelyn* to the force of circumstances which compelled him, as the condition of his sister's felicity, to give up all claim to the estate their mother possesses, and reduced him to the necessity of seeking an asylum in a house whose inmates are dedicated to the service of their God—is admirably delineated and portrayed. But *Jocelyn* had the internal satisfaction which a good man feels when he has done a good action ; or, in his own words,—

"Heav'n has rewarded me ! 'Twas yesterday
The happy Ernest bore his bride away.
Flashed from her eyes the bliss her bosom knew,
And to his own in warm transfusion flew.
Before the sacred altar as they knelt,
While both one sentiment of pleasure felt,
'T would seem that fortune's choicest gifts were shed,
And fav'ring genii hovered o'er their head,
To promise future bounties, and ensure
A long duration of that union pure !"
It was thus in witnessing the felicity of his sister

that Jocelyn was amply rewarded for the noble sacrifice he had made. But the hour for parting with his mother was dreadful.

“ ‘ Dear, tender parent, seek a calm repose ;’—
 ‘Twas thus I tried to soothe my mother’s woes ;—
 ‘ Absorb the anguish of your deep distress,
 A few short hours, in sleep’s forgetfulness :
 Pray for thy children, suffocate those sighs,
 And wipe the tear-drops from your streaming eyes,
 So that amid the visions of to-night
 No horrors break upon my mental sight.
 Wherefore anticipate the hour when you
 To him you reared must breathe a long adieu ?
 Alas ! full soon, already far too near,
 Will come that hour, despite of sigh and tear ;
 And then may God support thee, then from heaven
 May resignation to your soul be given ;
 And thou shalt see me enter on the race
 That God marks for me, with a smiling face.
 Sleep ! and when morning beams on all round,
 At your bed-side shall Jocelyn be found ;
 And if one tear of bitterness betray
 Our inward grief, Heav’n wipe the drop away ! ’ ”

And Jocelyn departed ; and as he turned away from the maternal mansion, his tears fell profusely. Thus concludes the diary of the first epoch.

The date at the commencement of the second epoch, and the introductory lines inform us that

six years have passed away since the era of Jocelyn's departure from the maternal dwelling. These six years have been spent in a religious seminary, in solitary tranquillity and sombre peace. The revolution now rages in all its fury, and the fertile plains of France are covered with blood. Jocelyn's mother and sister, and that fair sister's husband, quitted their disastrous country at the commencement of the civil tumult; and Jocelyn himself is obliged to fly from the persecuting hand that has thus exiled his family, and seek shelter in Dauphiny. He falls in with an old hermit, who kindly takes compassion upon him, and conducts him to the Eagle's Grotto, a cave situate amidst the almost impervious recesses of the windings of the Alps. It is surrounded by an immense gulf; the only communication with the main land, as it were, from this island, (for such appellations are appropriate to the localities M. De Lamartine beautifully describes,) is an immense arched bridge of ice, which frowns over the abyss beneath, and rears its lofty curve high in the air, so that none could possibly imagine its competency to afford so practicable a thoroughfare.

For some time Jocelyn lived contentedly in his forlorn retreat, without ever crossing the tremendous

bridge of communication. At length one morning he ventured to *reconnoître* the lands on the other side of the gulf. This is an era marked by a circumstance which formed an important feature in the life of Jocelyn, and gave him a companion in his exile.

An individual, outlawed by the government for political offences, had taken refuge amongst the Alps, and was pursued by two military emissaries sent in search of proscribed fugitives. The unfortunate individual was accompanied by his son, a youth of fifteen or sixteen, and as they ran along the edge of the gulf the soldiers prepared to fire. Jocelyn, on the cavern side of the abyss, unmindful of his own danger, made a sign to the fugitives, and pointed towards the bridge that might lead them to security. The outlaw and his son arrived at the middle of the curved mass of ice—Jocelyn received the latter safely in his arms, but the former was mortally wounded; not, however, before he had dealt death to the two soldiers who pursued him.

Laurence, such was the boy's name, was delicately but beautifully formed, •His countenance was fraught with feminine softness; his luxuriant hair fell in long ringlets over his well-shaped shoul-

ders ; his jacket was invariably buttoned up closely to his throat ; and his slender waist was encircled by his neckerchief, when he and Jocelyn climbed the mountains to collect fruits, catch birds, &c. &c., for their daily food. Jocelyn soon became sincerely attached to Laurence, and Laurence manifested a reciprocal regard for his friend. But Jocelyn often felt himself embarrassed in the society of Laurence, and frequently cast down his eyes to avoid meeting the glance which that affectionate youth threw at him.

Time passed on ; and, in Jocelyn's own words,—

“ Since griefs no longer his young heart oppress,
 How Laurence thrives in youthful loveliness !
 At times a heavenly radiance seems to shine
 Upon his brow ; and as his eyes meet mine,
 I scarce can brook the magic of his charms,
 But feel my bosom ruffled with alarms,—
 The holy fears that erst those women knew,
 When tow'rsd their Saviour's sepulchre they drew,
 And when the angel's answer to their prayer
 Told them in solemn sounds, ‘ *He is not there !* ’ ”

One morning Jocelyn ventured out at an early hour, and left Laurence asleep in the cave. Jocelyn crossed the bridge of ice which an avalanche had formed, and beneath which the waters dashed in

roaring eddies, thundering onwards, and scattering the foam around. He amused himself for some time in the regions without the gulf, and then retraced his steps towards the bridge. But a terrible storm overtook him, the rage of elements resembled the combat of armed warriors in deadly strife, the earth shook, the lightning flashed, the sky was clouded over. Jocelyn hurried onwards, and was nearly separated from Laurence for ever; for the bridge gave way and mingled with the torrents beneath. Jocelyn's activity, however, saved him, and he thanked God that Laurence was not with him.

Arrived at the cavern once more, he sought for Laurence, but sought in vain. Overcome with terror and horrible apprehensions, he almost yielded to his despair, when a certain trace led him towards a part of the gulf. Amidst the crags, near the torrents, and covered with beating sleet, lay Laurence. Jocelyn sprang to the bottom, seized his friend in his arms, and hurried with him to the cave.

"Long time I called him back to life in vain,
My lips no breath to his could give again;
Despairingly I placed him on my bed,
And staunch'd the blood that his fair brow had shed.

Still was he lifeless! From his bleeding breast,
E'en with my teeth, I rent the gory vest;
Great God! beneath that garment long concealed,
A female's lovely bosom was revealed!"

Laurence recovered, and now that Jocelyn found he might love his companion without fear and without restraint—when the mystery so singularly developed was fully explained by the blushing maiden, and when she no longer experienced the necessity of withholding a secret from her preserver, their mutual joy knew no bounds. But, alas! that felicity was of short duration. A train of circumstances, which our limits will not permit us to relate, compelled Jocelyn to become a priest, and to bid an eternal farewell to the distracted girl, who was removed from the Eagle's Grotto to the protection of friends. No impure passion had sullied her innocence, and Jocelyn was again alone in the world.

Peace was restored to France, and in process of time we see Jocelyn installed in a humble curacy in the vicinity of his favourite Alps. One day he is sent for to a neighbouring town to shrive the soul of a lady at the point of death. He is the only pastor in the neighbourhood, and he hastens to obey the summons.

" In the dull chamber sickly was the light,
The dingy curtains hid her from my sight,
Save when the slightest motion half revealed
A pallid brow, at other times concealed ;
And on that brow, so paly, yet so fair,
Were wildly scattered locks of auburn hair,
That, amply clust'ring o'er her bosom's swell,
Thence to the ground in rich profusion fell.

" ' Father ! ' she cried in accents scarce unknown,—
My soul was shaken by that dulcet tone ;
I felt, while all my frame convuls'd with fear,
A vague remembrance as it met my ear ;
And scarcely, in that moment of distress,
An exclamation could my lips suppress ! "

The lady proceeded with her confession, and told Jocelyn that her first and only love had been blighted in its bud, that she had since married another, that her husband died shortly after their union, and that she had vainly mingled in the dissipation and gaiety of life and society to chase away the reminiscences of her primal passion. Pleasure had been no solace to her—

" For still devoid of hope, alas ! each day
In bitterness and anguish passed away ;
And all the energies of life, declining,
Seemed to be broken by a constant pining.

Yet on her cheek remained the youthful bloom
 That half defied th' attraction of the tomb;
 Thus a fair tree, with foliage ever green,
 Contains a worm which gnaws its core unseen."

The lady pursued her confession in the same melancholy strain, composed half of bitterness and half of an unnatural joy that she was approaching her end, and concluded in the following manner:—

" ' Oh ! in the hour when dissolution's nigh,
 Could he but on me cast a tearful eye,
 And could his voice but whisper in my ear,
 That tender voice, to me so soft, so dear,
 The tomb would lose its sting !'

No more restrained
 By fear, I cried, ' Laurence, thy wish is gained !'
 The feeble lamp a sickly lustre shed,
 She rais'd herself with rapture in the bed,
 And gaz'd upon my features. ' Yes—'tis he !'

" ' Laurence, 't was God that sent me thus to thee,
 To grant you absolution, and ensure
 Peace to thy soul, no longer stained—but pure !' "

Laurence never rises from that bed, which was soon pressed by the cold corpse of one so lovely, so fascinating, and so unfortunate !

The remaining pages are uninteresting, save for their poetic beauty, and the proofs they afford of the originality of M. De Lamartine's genius. And

in these times when almost all are copyists, when our great predecessors have done so much, and have done that much so well, that we, their imitators, have little left to do save to embody their ideas in our own language, and then be at fault, the merit of originality is not only singular, but also one of the best recommendations for an author.

CHAPTER VI.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS is the most popular melodramatic writer in France—if not in Europe. His knowledge of stage-effect, and of the best methods of producing it, constitutes, in a mechanical point of view, the grand secret of his extraordinary success; and the interest of his plots never fails to attract a numerous audience to the Porte Saint Martin Theatre, of which he is, as it were, the presiding genius. His style is, however, more or less easily imitated; an assertion fully corroborated by the productions of Mallefille, Lockroy, Anicet Bourgeois, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, &c. Dumas is the most perfect of all these dramatic authors

in the construction of his plays; his sensibility is more natural, his style more even, and his ideas more correctly worked out. He is profound and philosophical in his views and conceptions; and without trusting to one brilliant scene for the success of the whole, he relies principally upon the *tout ensemble* itself—consequently, on the merits of his piece.

The coffers of this celebrated writer have been well filled from the treasuries of the various theatres and publishing houses in Paris. Even his earliest effusions were crowned with the most unparalleled success. The copyright of *Stockholm et Fontainebleau* was disposed of to Gustave Barba (the publisher of the novels of Paul de Kock and Pigault Lebrun) for the sum of 320*l.* sterling.—*Henri III.* for 1,200*l.*—and almost treble this last sum was given for *Angèle* and *Catherine Howard*. The performance of his various dramas in the different theatres throughout France produce him an average income of 340*l. per annum*; and for every article he writes in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* he receives 40*l.* His numerous works, independent of the dramas, such as *Les Souvenirs d'Antony*, *Impressions des Voyages*, &c., &c., have also enabled him to realize considerable pecuniary benefits.

But it is not as a melo-dramatic writer only, that M. Dumas is famous. His *Souvenirs d'Antony*—a collection of tales in one volume—exhibit the powers of a great novelist; and his *Impressions des Voyages* are replete with amusing anecdotes, striking observations, and picturesque descriptions. He has the soul of a poet, and the imagination of one: but he writes too hurriedly, and trusts too much to a great reputation to ensure the success of his productions, without always bestowing sufficient time upon the corrections which a more prudent author would introduce on a re-perusal.

La Tour de Nesle is a terrible melo-drama, which could only be rendered tolerable to an English audience by cutting out one or two murders and three or four other scenes of horror. And yet it is one of the most popular pieces that have ever been represented upon the stage of the Porte Saint Martin Theatre.

But *Angèle* is decidedly the *chef-d'œuvre* of M. Dumas' dramatic performances, albeit he was only occupied eleven days in the composition of it. This play affords us a striking illustration of the sway which women invariably exercise in France. In England, the fair sex are regarded in somewhat a Mohammedan point of view: in France they are

not only really worshipped and adored, but also admitted to the enjoyment of a certain influence which naturally tends to raise them in their own estimation, enlarges their minds, improves their faculties, and enables them to reason, counsel, and plan with all the readiness of men. That such an influence should be enjoyed by women, is not only just but necessary; and if any argument were wanting to support this proposition, let us merely advance the fact that, in all ages, have there been numbers of great and illustrious women in France. The heroines of M. Dumas are for the most part women of powerful and strong minds, though led away by their passions to the commission of those weaknesses or crimes which the plan of his melo-dramas compels them to fall into for the purpose of working out a certain plot: but it will be seen, that M. Dumas not only recognises the influence of the fair sex in all affairs, whether domestic, commercial, or diplomatic, but also assents to the necessity of such sway being exercised by them. The same observation applies to Victor Hugo and to the generality of French authors.

Angèle was first performed at the theatre of the Porte Saint Martin on the 28th of December,

1833, and experienced the most brilliant success. We have before observed that it is the best of M. Dumas' melo-dramatic works; and shall therefore hasten to lay an analysis, with copious extracts, of it before the reader.

ANGELE.

Alfred d'Alvimar, an adventurer, is residing with his mistress, whom he passes off as his sister, in the lodging-house of a M. Muller, at Cotterets in the Pyrenees. Other apartments of the same house are occupied by Madame Angélique and her niece Angèle. Angèle is the daughter of a widow lady, Madame de Gaston, who resides at Paris. M. Muller has a son, Henri, whose health is in a most precarious state—so much so, that his father was obliged to interpose his paternal authority, and prevent his son from following the only resource his wounded mind delighted in—the art of painting. Henri is also a surgeon; but a pulmonary complaint entirely supersedes the possibility of his pursuing any profession or laborious employment. He therefore resides with his father; and, as his disposition is kind, so his soul is susceptible; and the beauty of Angèle speedily makes a deep and last-

ing impression upon him. But he conceals his love; for he sees that Alfred d'Alvimar and the inexperienced girl, who has only entered her seventeenth year at this period, entertain and cherish a secret but firm attachment to each other, with only this difference—that the passion of Angèle is as pure as that of Alfred is selfish and interested.

Ernestine, the mistress of Alfred D'Alvimar, detects the secret of her faithless lover, and leaves him. Her *suite* of apartments, to which Alfred retains a key, are now given to Madame Angélique and Angèle, not only on account of being more commodious, but particularly because Madame de Gaston, Angèle's mother, is expected to arrive the next day and pass some time with her daughter.

Alfred now sees that he has no time to lose. He possesses the heart of Angèle; but in case of opposition to his suit, he is resolved to make her dependent upon his mercy and honour. The day passes away—Alfred always by the side of the unsuspecting girl, whom he has determined to ruin. Madame Angélique affords the lovers ample opportunity of conversing together in the evening, and at length they retire to their respective chambers.

On the following morning, Angèle and Alfred

find themselves together and alone after breakfast. Their conversation will best continue the narrative for a short period.

Alfred. Angèle, dear Angèle—compose yourself.

Angèle. My God! my God!

Alfred. It was love that—

Angèle. O Alfred! they may well be surprised to see me in this condition. I feel myself blushing, and my colour coming and receding ten times in every minute; my tears suffocate me. What would I give to weep!

Alfred. Endeavour to restrain your emotions, dear girl.

Angèle. Ah! I was fearful of evil; last night I retired to slumber without addressing my prayers to God.

Alfred. Need angels pray?

Angèle. And now—we have sinned, have we not? It is not a crime?

Alfred. Oh! if it were a crime, I alone am guilty; but it is not a crime, for you are my bride in the sight of Heaven. Angèle, ah! no—it cannot be a crime; for were I culpable, I should not be happy.

Angèle. You are happy, then?

Alfred. I am in paradise.

Angèle. And it is to me that you are indebted for that felicity?

Alfred. To thee—yes—to thee alone.

Angèle. Tell me that once more—your words console me.

Alfred. I repeat, Angèle, I owe my happiness to you. Such is the blissful lot of woman! God has sent her upon this earth to be the source of all good; and every favour she accords to him she loves, is in his mind a joyous reminiscence for the rest of his life.

Angèle. 'Tis true—too true; she bestows the happiness and preserves the shame!

Alfred. The shame, Angèle! Oh! who will ever know that there is a secret existing between us?

With such specious arguments as these Alfred succeeds in consoling Angèle; he then leaves her to hasten to meet Madame de Gaston, whose arrival is expected in a hour or two. During his absence, Henri Muller has a long conversation with Madame Angélique and Angèle, during which he gives a true and touching representation of his hopeless and incurable bodily predicament, and of his indifference to life. The following paragraph is fine indeed:

while it is capable of producing the greatest possible stage effect, it is also affecting, imposing, and true.

Henri. What? you wish I should become acquainted with the tenderness of love? Oh! if in my dying bosom I felt that sacred flame arise, I would conceal it for ever: I would hide it from every eye; I would crush it with all my energies, for fear another should share it—although, in so doing, my heart were to break!

Angèle. Henri! O Henri!

Henri. I think so well of life, of the honour of men, and of the purity of women, that I can well imagine the extent of all the felicity that a hateful horizon conceals from my eyes. Pity me, Angèle—pity me; to be deplored by you—Oh! it would console me!

Angèle. Yes, I pity you; but I cannot believe all you assert.

Henri. And then, Angèle, this lamentable state has made me selfish, and silenced my former honourable feelings. I cannot bear to see an individual destined, as far as we may judge of physical force, to live to an old age, to love, and to be loved; for the impossibility of enjoying the blessings of love, Angèle, is all I regret in life—most solemnly I aver

it! When I see that individual whom fortune has been bountiful to, I say, "Great God! how do his virtues so much excel mine!" When, breathless with fatigue, I ascend the lofty Pyrenees, in the eager hope that a purer air will refresh me, if a young tree, replete with verdure and with vigour, meet mine eye, I become jealous of that vegetative energy which I have not, and I rend it wilfully from its roots; or if an insignificant flower attract my glance, while it is yet fresh and expanding to the sun, I crush it beneath my feet! In fine, there are those moments of despair when I seem to feel the agonies of life to be insupportable, and then am I ready to conclude my days in the blood of a distracted suicide.

This conversation, in which the author has displayed great knowledge of the human mind, and where his acquaintance with the force, the changes, and the versatilities of the passions is fully developed, is interrupted by the arrival of Madame de Gaston, whom Alfred D'Alvimar has happily encountered in time to save from a precipice into which she would have probably fallen.

Madame de Gaston is pressed by business, and can only stay a couple of hours at Cotterets. Alfred

seeks an interview with her in order to demand the hand of Angèle. The scene is too remarkable to be negligently passed over.

Madame de Gaston (to Alfred, who is about to retire). You leave me also ?

Alfred. I was afraid of being indiscreet in remaining longer.

Madame de Gaston. You cannot think so. Remember that I depart in another hour—that I know not when I may see you again ; that I have not yet had a proper opportunity to return you meet thanks ; and that if you quit me thus, I shall have scarcely had time to recollect the name of my deliverer—and that name I would fain remember.

Alfred. I thank you, Madam ; for my mind was full of the sorrowful idea, that accident often throws us in the way of an individual whose acquaintance we have scarcely had time to make, when we are separated without even a hope of meeting again.

Madame de Gaston. Did you belong to the old court of Charles the Tenth ?

Alfred. Wherefore that question, Madam ?

Madame de Gaston. Because your gallantry savours of the Faubourg Saint Germain.

Alfred. You are right, Madam ; I am the Baron

D'Alvimar. I enjoyed, under the dethroned monarch, a certain distinction ; and I obtained for my services a title and a pension.

Madame de Gaston. And the fall of the Bourbons lost you all this ?

Alfred. I am not yet aware of the extent of my embarrassments : but I assure you that I tremble.

Madame de Gaston. You have only exiled yourself then, as it were, since the Revolution ?

Alfred. No, Madam. Some time previous to its arrival, I foresaw the fatal catastrophe. Vainly I expostulated with our ministers ; vainly I endeavoured to point out that they were not employing political measures suitable to the ideas of the people. So often did I repeat these arguments, that one day my frankness was reproached, and a timely hint made me aware of the disgrace it would procure for me. This was easily comprehended. I quitted Paris immediately, deploring the blindness of those to whom I owed everything. My prediction was speedily verified ; and even here I heard the din of a fallen throne, and the great cry of joy and of liberty which issued from the people.

Madame de Gaston. Well, Sir, now that reformation will remodel the government, what should hinder you from attaching yourself to the new dy-

nasty? The ancient government, by its ingratitude, has become unworthy of your remembrance; those who were in disgrace yesterday are in favour to-day; and supposing that you require means for a reconciliation with the cause of liberty, I would charge myself to clear the way before you.

Alfred. Ah! Madam—

Madame de Gaston. Whatever I might do for you, consider me still eternally obliged—

Alfred. A thousand thanks, Madam, for that offer, but I cannot accept it; I should tremble, isolated being that I am, and having no family motive to attach me to the court of the new dynasty—I should tremble at every look, dreading to be deemed interested and selfish, instead of acting from conscientious motives.

Madame de Gaston. Marry, then; you will soon have a tender tie to reconcile you to all you now imagine disagreeable. Once married, you would not solicit a place—you would accept it.

Alfred. On this head I have well reflected, Madam; but what probability is there that any family would condescend to receive me whose fortunes are dubious, and whose resources were dried up by the heat of the Revolution?

Madame de Gaston. Whether you have framed erroneous notions of the world, or whether you

yourself—but (*laughing*) shall I find you a wife? And if you be not too particular—

Alfred. From your hand, Madam, I would receive her blindfold. But Angèle (*attentively examining the features of Madame de Gaston*)—does she not return with you to Paris?

Madame de Gaston. No; her health requires care and attention; the balls, the *soirées*, the hot rooms, and the late hours, would kill her.

Alfred. But, Madam, you, who ere now advised me to marry, do you not think of choosing a husband for Angèle?

Madame de Gaston. Angèle! she is a child!

Alfred. She has numbered sixteen years; and you, Madam, must have been married still earlier.

Madame de Gaston. That is true; but listen. You have given me your confidence; I will give you mine. The manner in which we became acquainted, your service to me, my gratitude, and other collateral circumstances, have established between us, in the space of an hour—I know not what to say, our language is so deficient in synonyms—that intimacy, that confidence—which shall I call it?—which is usually the result of a longer acquaintance. I am going to tell you, then, my projects, as I would tell them to an old friend. I was married to

General Gaston during the short period that intervened between the secession of Napoleon to Elba and his return. Napoleon, you know, was a military god; my husband, whose idol he was, immediately joined him when he again appeared in France. The general was killed at Waterloo. His death drove me into a quiet retreat; and there I gave birth to a child, who never saw its father. That child is Angèle. I was sixteen years old the day she was born. Although I had scarcely tasted the blandishments of life, I devoted myself with maternal solicitude to my child. The disgrace in which my husband's name was involved at court, prevented me from hoping for any other enjoyment, while my fortune was still inadequate to supply luxuries for myself and daughter. It was then that my Aunt Angélique took care of Angèle, and separated us until now, a period of fifteen years.

* * * * *

Therefore if I were to marry my child to any one before I had chosen another partner for life, I should give to my son-in-law a certain right over me, and an authority in my house; and he would say to his wife, if I desired to change my situation, "Why, your mother is silly; she will soon be a grandmamma, and she marries again!" And, in

saying this, he would not be far wrong. Angèle is sixteen years old—she can wait a year or two; but I—I have completed thirty-one: is it not more reasonable that I should first ensure my own happiness—my own position, in fine—and that I employ my little influence at court in favour of the individual who will accept that influence as a dowry? I am certain to procure for my husband, or for him that is about to be, all that I choose to ask; and perhaps, in return, I might meet that happiness, arising from gratitude, which I could not reasonably anticipate from love.

Alfred (aside). Ah!

The reader may imagine the consequences of the above familiar confessions of Madame de Gaston; whose character is admirably delineated and pictured by her own mouth, and whose apparent levity is so strikingly the prominent feature of a French lady of *haut ton*. Alfred d'Alvimar is resolved to attach himself to Madame de Gaston, and to resign his pretensions to the hand of Angèle. He accordingly accompanies the widow to Paris, and leaves the wretched Angèle behind, a prey to all the horrors contingent to her forlorn, hopeless, and pitiable situation.

More than eight months have passed since the departure of the faithless Alfred d'Alvimar from the peaceful dwelling at Cotterets, where he left behind him a heart filled with bitterness and grief. We now find him and Madame de Gaston about to give a grand ball to their acquaintances at Paris, and to announce the approximating period for the celebration of their nuptials. Madame de Gaston has made interest with the mistress of the prime minister, and has procured for her intended husband a diplomatic appointment, the ratification of which Madame de Varcy (the minister's mistress) is to present him with at the ball. Alfred has never seen Madame de Varcy; and he is naturally anxious to have an opportunity of thanking the individual who has thus so energetically exerted herself for him, while he is probably a stranger to her.

All is gaiety and mirth in the house of Madame de Gaston; and while Alfred d'Alvimar is anxiously waiting for the arrival of the minister's mistress, Madame de Varcy, he is not the less anxious on another affair—the one nearest and dearest to all his interests. That evening Madame de Gaston has promised to announce their approaching nuptials to the fashionable visitors who are to be present at the ball. But ere many people be yet arrived, an

unexpected circumstance entirely disarranges her various plans. A person desires to speak with her in an antechamber, adjoining which is a bed-room—that person is Angèle !

Angèle. My dear mother !

Madame de Gaston. Angèle ! you here !

Angèle (throwing herself into her mother's arms).
My mother ! my dear mother ! you love me, do you not ?

Madame de Gaston. Wherefore that question, dear child ? do you doubt my affection ? But what annoys you ? Why this sudden return—and that mourning ? (*Angèle is in mourning.*)

Angèle. Poor Aunt Angélique !

Madame de Gaston. Oh ! my God !

Angèle. She died suddenly ; no one anticipated it. Dear mother, do you hear me ?

Madame de Gaston. Yes ; poor aunt !

Angèle. Then I was all alone, and in bad health ; and I thought that if any evil happened to me, I might die far away from my mother—and I would not die except in her arms !

Madame de Gaston. What an idea, Angèle !

Angèle. Oh ! you know not what I have suffered !

Madame de Gaston. You are indeed altered.

Angèle. Yes ; I hesitated to return home to you, fearful that you might be angry ; but I said to myself, "My mother loves me!"—Is it not true, dear mother, that you love me?

Madame de Gaston. Yes, dear child.

Angèle. And you will pardon me for having returned thus suddenly ! for I could not dwell longer in that old mansion at Cotterets ; I should have died—Oh ! I should have died !

Madame de Gaston. Well, well, dear Angèle ; but calm yourself.

Angèle (regarding her mother with attention). You are elegantly dressed—you are dressed for a *soirée*.

Madame de Gaston. This happens very inconveniently. What is to be done ? One cannot close one's doors against—

Angèle. Ah ! you are going to give a ball ?

Madame de Gaston. Yes ; but if M. d'Alvimar were here, he would be able to tell us what is to be done.

Angèle. Is he not in Paris ?

Madame de Gaston. Oh ! yes—he is here ; in a moment you will see him.

Angèle. Ah !

Madame de Gaston. Heavens! are you ill; wherefore do you turn so pale?

Angèle. Oh! 'tis nothing.

Madame de Gaston. What shall we do? Troublesome ball!

Angèle. There is no alternative—you must give it.

Madame de Gaston. Will you be present?

Angèle. Oh! no, dear mother, I could not. Fatigued—ill as I am—Oh! do not ask me, I implore you. My little room is vacant?

Madame de Gaston. Yes—it was prepared for your reception; I should have written to you in a few days, recommending your return. M. d'Alvimar and I were speaking of you only ten minutes before your arrival; and we were arranging a little plan relative to you—

Angèle. Relative to me?

Madame de Gaston. Yes.

Angèle. Oh! how kind you are to think of me, dear mother! (*The front-door bell rings.*) Ah! here are visitors—here are some of the company already arrived; I shall hasten to retire.

Madame de Gaston (*opening the door of the bedroom adjoining*). There, dear Angèle, there is your room.

Angèle, attended by her confidante, Louise, retires to her chamber; and in the mean time, Alfred d'Alvimar has heard the unwelcome tidings that Henri Muller is in Paris, and will be at the ball that very night. While he is still ruminating on this unpleasant news, a servant announces the entrance of Madame de Varcy. Alfred hastens to greet and welcome her; and in the minister's mistress recognises Ernestine, the lady whom he had formerly passed off as his sister, and who had left him at Cotterets.

Madame de Varcy, for such was the name Ernestine had adopted, presents her former lover with the *brevet* of his commission as ambassador plenipotentiary to a foreign court. He opens it, and finds the date of his departure fixed at three days from that moment. He expostulates, but vainly; Madame de Varcy had purposely and maliciously conducted this arrangement by means of her influence with the minister. Alfred refuses to accept the post—and returns the *brevet*. Madame de Varcy mingles with the gay crowd in the ball-room; and Madame de Gaston encounters Alfred as opportunely as she could desire; for she has news of vast import to communicate to his ear.

Madame de Gaston. But wherefore are you thus agitated?

Alfred. You must announce our projected marriage this very evening, and publicly too.

Madame de Gaston. To-night! On account of this very circumstance I have now sought you in this antechamber. It is impossible!

Alfred. And wherefore?

Madame de Gaston. Angèle is here!

Alfred. Angèle!

Madame de Gaston. The moment you left me ere now—

Alfred. Angèle is here!

Madame de Gaston. In that very room (*she points to the bed-room adjoining*).

Alfred. Ah!

Madame de Gaston. And you are well aware that it is impossible to announce an intended marriage of which my child is ignorant, and which, to speak frankly, I scarcely know how to break to her.

Alfred. You are right—it is impossible—entirely impossible—you are indeed right.

Madame de Gaston. We will procrastinate it for a few days—we can do no more.

Alfred. Yes—yes—two or three days—that is all.

Madame de Gaston. Oh! how happy I am that your views meet mine.

Madame de Gaston is summoned by a gentleman, to whom her hand is engaged for the next dance, and Alfred remains alone in the antechamber to ruminate upon the difficulties which the presence of Angèle and Henri Muller has occasioned. While he is in the midst of his infelicitous reflections, the door of Angèle's room opens—Louise, her confidante, issues forth, and presents a letter to d'Alvimar. He tears it open—he reads it with horror—and an exclamation of "Impossible!" escapes his lips. Louise assures him of the truth of the letter's contents. He hesitates—Louise conjures him to decide—he rushes into Angèle's room, followed by the confidante, as Henri Muller enters the antechamber he has just left, by the door communicating with the ball-room. We will again continue the narrative by quoting from the piece; and, if our readers have any idea of dramatic energy and effect, they will not fail to admire the next scene.

Henri Muller (alone). Oh! how I suffer! The air, heated by the wax-candles, and tainted by the

odours of flowers, suffocates me; that noise—those shouts of merriment—that din of glee distracts my brain; here, only, can I breathe with facility. (*He throws his hat upon the sofa, and seats himself.*) Oh! I ought not to have ventured hither—but I expected to hear some news of Angèle, and yet I have not dared to utter her name in the presence of her mother, fearful that my emotions would betray me. Oh! how happy appears that gay circle of fashion! A ball is indeed a scene of pleasure to those who can enjoy it.

[*Alfred d'Alvimar rushes, pale and agitated, from the chamber of Angèle.*]

Alfred. What is to be done? What will become of her? Where can I find the individual I require at this instant—at this hour?

Henri (rising). Monsieur d'Alvimar.

Alfred. Henri Muller! (*A sudden idea strikes him.*) Yes, there is no other means—no alternative.

Henri. What ails you?

Alfred (running towards him and grasping his hands). Sir, you are a man of honour, and know what honour is; you must therefore assist me to save that of a female—of a lady.

Henri. How, Sir? Explain yourself.

Alfred. Sir, you are a surgeon, and, in that capacity, you must have not unfrequently received applications similar to the one I am about to make ; promise to accord my petition. Oh ! promise me !

Henri. If it be not inconsistent with my duties as a surgeon—if it do not compromise my peculiar safety—

Alfred. That which I request of you is not inconsistent with your duty as a medical man—neither does it compromise your personal security.

Henri. Speak, then.

Alfred. So far from hence that there is not a moment to be lost, a young girl—a young lady of high family,—a young female, whose dishonour would redound to all her relatives—a young girl is about to become a mother !

Henri. I comprehend your purpose.

Alfred. You are willing—

Henri. I am ready to follow you.

Alfred. But listen—this is not all—

Henri. Speak.

Alfred. This young lady may meet you in after life—

Henri. Such a secret is sacred, Sir ; I should not recognise her.

Alfred. But she would recognise you, and she

would die with shame, Sir. Listen! and do not perform this essential service by halves. Permit—

Henri. What?

Alfred. Permit me to bandage your eyes, and that I may conduct you, thus blindfolded, to her chamber.

Henri. I understand you.

Alfred. And you consent?

Henri. I should have proposed the same to you.

Alfred (aside). How fortunate!

Henri (taking his hat). I am ready.

Alfred. Descend the staircase, Sir, and wait for me at the corner of the street, in a carriage which you may hire; I will speedily rejoin you.

[*Henri Muller leaves the antechamber.*]

Alfred. Louise!

Louise. Sir.

Alfred. In a quarter of an hour I shall return. Re-assure your mistress all will yet be well.

Louise. Hasten, Sir, for the love of God!

Alfred. I will.

[*Louise enters Angèle's chamber. Alfred, who turns to depart, encounters Ernestine.*]

Ernestine. Have you reflected on my proposition, Sir?

Alfred. Yes.

Ernestine. And your decision?

Alfred. Send me my *brevet* to-morrow.

Ernestine. And in three days—

Alfred. I shall be on my journey.

[*They separate.*]

By this time the ball is over ; the company have departed ; the lights are about to be extinguished ; and Madame de Gaston hastens to the chamber of Angèle, to embrace her daughter ere she retires for the night. She, however, finds the door made fast, and naturally concludes that her daughter sleeps. She makes ample allowance for the fatigue of Angèle, and does not persist in endeavouring to disturb her by so late an entrance. Louise, at this moment, issues from the room ; and, by confirming the suspicion of Madame de Gaston that Angèle sleeps, succeeds in preventing her from going into the chamber.

Madame de Gaston. Yes, yes, you are right, Louise ; she must be weary, after her tedious journey, poor child. Tell her that I came ; and that I thought of her a thousand times during the evening. Let her remain in bed to-morrow, and I will come and see her early.

[*Madame de Gaston retires ; the lights are put out ; and the stage is involved in obscurity.*
Louise closes the door through which Madame

de Gaston disappeared, and remains alone in the antechamber.]

Louise. Oh! how I tremble. Will they come to-night? Great God! have pity on my poor mistress! (*A knocking is heard at the window.*) They come! they come! Thank heaven! they come! (*Going to the window.*) 'Tis he! (*She opens it hastily.*) Oh! Sir, you are come at length!

Alfred. Silence! (*To Henri Muller, who follows.*) We are here, Sir; this is the house. (*Alfred enters by the window, assisting Henri Muller, whose eyes are blindfolded, to mount the ladder outside after him.*) Take care; be cautious. (*At the moment Henri is safe in the antechamber, Alfred addresses him.*) You gave me your word of honour never to seek to recognise—

Henri. I renew my promise.

Alfred (to Louise). There is no light in the bedroom?

Louise. None.

Alfred (leading Henri into Angèle's chamber). Follow me!

Since this eventful era, some days must be supposed to have passed away; and Madame de Gaston, at length alarmed for the health of her daughter,

sends Henri Muller to visit her in his capacity of surgeon. The discovery Henry now makes probably forms the finest scene in the whole piece; and, as we desire to place the merits of the author as frequently as possible in their best light, we shall as heretofore continue the tale for a short time by extracts from the play.

[Angèle's apartment. Henri Muller approaches with gentle steps the long sofa on which Angèle reclines. Angèle hides her face with her hands. Henri gazes upon her for a moment, his arms folded, and then addresses her.]

Henri. Miss Angèle—Miss Angèle!

Angèle (raising her head, and looking around her).

And my mother, where is she?

Henri. She has gone out for a moment.

Angèle. Oh!

Henri. I thought you would have experienced a greater pleasure than you appear to do in seeing an old friend.

Angèle. Pardon my indifference—but—

Henri (seating himself by her side). Will you give me your hand?

Angèle. My hand!

Henri. As a surgeon, I request it.

Angèle. And as a friend I give it to you.

Henri. It is very hot, and burning—you are feverish.

Angèle (withdrawing her hand). Good God! if he were to detect—

Henri. What ails you? Speak, Angèle.

Angèle. Nothing ails me.

Henri. That is impossible; you suffer—you must have suffered greatly; for you are pale and altered.

Angèle. Do not regard me thus, M. Muller—you do me harm—you inflict a deep wound—

Henri. My God! what harm could I do to you? what wound inflict upon you?

Angèle. Grief for the death of my aunt—the fatigues of my long journey—and nothing else—have made me ill; in a few days I shall be well.

Henri. And when did you arrive?

Angèle. Four days ago—the night of the ball.

Henri. M. d'Alvimar assured me it was the morning after.

Angèle. He made a mistake, doubtless; for I saw him a few moments after I descended from the carriage which brought me hither.

Henri. And wherefore did you not appear for an instant in the ball-room?

Angèle. I was in mourning—I was wearied—

Henri. Where were you during the ball?

Angèle. In this room.

Henri. In this room?

Angèle. Yes, it is mine own.

Henri (struck with a sudden idea). I remember, Angèle—yes—I saw Alfred d'Alvimar, pale—agitated—issue from this room—at the moment when—*(he looks attentively at Angèle, rises from his chair, starts back, and cries, in an emphatic tone)* It is impossible!

Angèle. What—what is impossible?

Henri (gazing anxiously around him). My God! my God!

Angèle (seeing him rush towards the door). What is he doing?

Henri (opening the door). Yes—here is the window on the ground floor—there is the entrance—this is a piece of furniture against which I dashed my foot. *(Going straight up to Angèle, who is astounded.)* Angèle, Angèle, answer me, as you would reply to your God.

Angèle. Speak—speak—oh! keep me not in suspense.

Henri. Angèle—the night of the ball—

Angèle (repeating his words mechanically). The night of the ball—

Henri. A man conducted by Alfred d'Alvimar—

Angèle. Well—well—

Henri. His eyes blindfolded—

Angèle. Stop—stop—

Henri. Came into your room—

Angèle. And how do you know it?

Henri. It was I!

Angèle (throwing herself on the floor, her head downwards). My God! my God! Oh! kill me!

Henri (extending his arms). Oh! Oh!

Angèle. (raising her head gently, and looking at Muller; then suddenly rising altogether). And my child, Sir—what have you done with my child!

Henri. What do you say—I scarcely comprehend you—what do you say?

Angèle. My son! my son! they told me that it was a son, and that the surgeon had taken it away! Oh! what is become of it—you do not answer me.

Henri. He lives.

This consolatory information essentially cheers the spirits of the unhappy Angèle, who in one short year passed through every excess of misery—of shame—of humiliation—and despair. Oh! what an excellent moral is afforded by this drama, not to those who have sinned, but to those who deem themselves strong in virtue's ways, and incapable of sinning as Angèle sinned.

Henri Muller promises that she shall see her child ; and while he resolves that Madame de Gaston must be informed of d'Alvimar's treachery and a daughter's shame, he is nevertheless comforted by the assurance of Angèle, that Alfred has sworn to espouse, and repair the fragrant wrong he has done her. Henri now leaves the unfortunate victim of a villain's treachery, and hastens to send Madame de Gaston to receive the confession of a penitent girl. The dialogue that contains the fatal development is not less interesting, though probably less dramatic, than the former one ere now quoted.

Madame de Gaston. What can this secret be ?

Angèle (reposing her head upon her mother's knees).

Oh ! my mother !

Madame de Gaston. There—I now see thee, Angèle, as thou wast wont to be when young, and when, fatigued with playing all day, thou didst sleep with thine head upon my knees. And then I was entrusted with thy little secrets, and thine ideas were mine ; and I was not obliged to seek into the depths of thy soul to extract them, for they flowed spontaneously, innocence being their source ; and as thy sentiments partly lingered upon thy rosy lips—Oh, Angèle ! have I made thee weep—and pale ? Some grief—some internal pain—a disappointed love, perhaps ?

Angèle. Yes! yes!

Madame de Gastou. Well, then, to whom wouldst thou speak of thy love, if it were not to thy mother? Let us see—tell me all thy tale. Thou canst not love an individual unworthy of thee?

Angèle. I dare not.

Madame de Gaston. Speak—I have also a secret to tell thee!

Angèle. You!

Madame de Gaston. Yes. I will begin, and then you will tell me all.

Angèle. Oh! how kind you are!

Madame de Gaston. You are sensible—one may confide any thing to you; and then you may assist me with your advice.

Angèle. Ah! you laugh at me, mamma.

Madame de Gaston. Well—and now in my turn, I am almost as much embarrassed as you. *Angèle,* I am going to be married.

Angèle (throwing herself upon her mother's neck). You, my mother!

Madame de Gaston. Yes, I am foolish enough, *Angèle*; but I shall not love thee less, my child, nor neglect thine happiness the more on that account. Your father-in-law will love and protect you.

Angèle. You do well—you are right.

Madame de Gaston. You approve of my plan!

Angèle. Oh, my dear parent! have I the right to approve or disapprove?

Madame de Gaston. Well, then, now you need not be afraid to speak.

Angèle. Oh! I—

Madame de Gaston. It must be something dreadful indeed, *Angèle*, that thus prevents you from speaking before me.

Angèle. Indeed it is dreadful, dear mother!

Madame de Gaston. You terrify me, *Angèle*; seriously, you disquiet me; what have you to fear in your mother?

Angèle. Oh, my kind parent! If I had my child here I would place him at your feet, and then you would pardon me!

Madame de Gaston. Unhappy girl! what is it you say?

Angèle. I say, my mother, pardon!—pardon!—Oh! pardon!

Madame de Gaston. Proceed.

Angèle. I say, moreover, that a man came—I did not know myself, dear mother—I was with my aunt—

Madame de Gaston. Oh!

Angèle. Poor aunt! it was not her fault, dear mother. I loved that man. You were not on the spot, I was without advice, without support—

Madame de Gaston. Oh! Oh!

Angèle. Yes, my mother—and now you will not forgive me.

Madame de Gaston (rising). Dear child, I will forgive you. Oh! I will forgive—pardon—forget your fault. And yet all this is *my* fault! for if I had watched you, if I had done my duty as a parent ought—but tell me—at least I should know this man's name.

Angèle. Oh! you were right when you deemed him worthy of me by birth and social position.

Madame de Gaston. His name—his name—

Angèle. You know it already—he is a friend of your's.

Madame de Gaston. His name.

Angèle. Alfred d'Alvimar.

Madame de Gaston (falling upon her knees). Oh! now it is for you to pardon me!

Angèle. How?

Madame de Gaston. Alfred d'Alvimar!

Angèle. Yes!

Madame de Gaston. He was to have been my husband!

Angèle (astonished). That man loves you, mamma?

Madame de Gaston. He has told me so.

Angèle (falling upon the sofa). My God! my God! have pity upon us!

A few days have elapsed since a mother and daughter thus made a terrible discovery; and Alfred d'Alvimar's bosom is somewhat touched with remorse on account of all the injuries he has so wantonly inflicted upon Angèle. But his better feelings relapse into his usual selfishness, when a note from Madame de Varcy, accompanying the *brevet* of his appointment, is put into his hands. That letter informs him of certain ministerial changes, which increase the power of Madame de Varcy, and totally annihilate the little influence of Madame de Gaston. He therefore signifies to the minister's mistress his intention of an immediate departure. But he encounters Madame de Gaston in an unlucky moment, and is obliged to listen to the supplications she uses to urge him to repair the dishonour of her daughter. All the energy and emphasis of language, which grief and despair give force to, are for some time poured forth in vain; and the wretched mother fruitlessly reproaches herself as the giddy and indirect cause of all Angèle's miseries. At length the

selfish soul of d'Alvimar begins to soften—his heart smites him when he sees Madame de Gaston on her knees at his feet—he cannot reject that last humiliation of a parent vituperating herself for her child's ruin. Overcome by means of that parent's solicitude—and yielding to the power of persuasive appeal, he declares his intention of repairing the wrongs he has been guilty of towards Angèle, and desires Madame de Gaston to hasten to her notary, and bring him thither to draw up the marriage contract. Madame de Gaston does as he commands her; and, during her absence, Alfred's good resolutions vanish. He orders his domestic to fetch a vehicle to the door, and in the meantime hurries to another apartment to make a few preparations he has hitherto forgotten. The following scene will now continue the tale.

[*Henri Muller enters the apartment which Alfred d'Alvimar has just left; he is pale and agitated.*]

Henri. The wretch! (*He locks the door at the bottom of the room, and puts the key in his pocket. He then seats himself at a table, where there are writing materials, and traces a few lines on a piece of paper.*) It only remains to be decided between us two.

[Alfred d'Alvimar rushes into the room from a side-door, and endeavours to open the one at the bottom; he shakes it violently, finds it is locked, and, in turning round, he notices Henri Muller.]

Alfred. Ah! 'Tis well—name your weapons, Sir!

Henri. Indeed! then you guess the object of my presence here?

Alfred.—I guess it—and I thank you. My dispute is with a man now; I was tired of warring upon women; and I would rather it should be you than another, for I am wearied of your importunities, and you are equally disgusted with me; and haply I am wearied of existence as I am of your presence. Therefore kill me, or let me kill you, it matters but little; for if I be not rid of you, I shall be of life. But hasten—hasten, Sir, I pray you.

Henri. Oh! it is not I that will cause unnecessary delay.

Alfred. Which, then, are your weapons?—name them quickly. As for me, I have no choice. Does the sword suit you?

Henri. Ah! Sir, you see that I am feeble—that my hand would wield the sword with difficulty—that you would disarm me at the first blow—that I

should be at your mercy—then you might be generous—and you might accord me my life—and—

Alfred. Oh! no, no; on that score be not afraid.

Henri. Then you would assassinate me?

Alfred. Well, well. Choose pistols, Sir, at fifteen paces—each to load and fire till one falls, even though it be ten times.

Henri. You would still have too great an advantage over me, Sir, for my sight is feeble, and my hand trembles. I will not stand before you as a victim, but as an enemy.

Alfred. Name your own conditions, for the love of God; place the combat on a fair level, if it be possible; and anything you propose I will accept. Yes—yes—provided we fight this minute.

Henri. I thank you. These are my conditions. Of two pistols, let one be charged—let us stand face to face, and foot to foot—fire at the same instant—and thus one of us must fall. In this case the advantages of strength and skill become void; and the judgment of God will alone decide our fates. And take care, Sir, for God is just.

Alfred. (*impatiently*). Enough—enough. But where shall we find seconds who will permit such a duel?

Henri. We do not want them.

Alfred. And the charge of murder—

Henri (*drawing from his pocket the scrap of paper he had ere now traced a few lines on*). This will prove the contrary.

Alfred. (*reading*). "Wearied of existence, I have been compelled to commit suicide. Let none be accused of my assassination."

Henri. If I fall, Sir, that paper will be found upon me.

Alfred (*taking a pen, writes a similar sentence on a piece of paper, and puts it in his pocket*). 'Tis well. Now to the Bois de Boulogne.

Henri. It's not necessary. The garden is at hand.

Alfred. Will you accept one of my pistols?

Henri. Certainly.

Alfred. I will fetch them.

Henri (*stopping Alfred*). A moment, Sir; your chamber has two doors.

Alfred. (*glancing an angry look at Henri Muller*). Had that chamber, Sir, the hundred gates of Thebes, I pledge you my word of honour that I would alone make use of this single door of communication.

Henri. I shall wait for you here.

[*Alfred goes into the next room.*]

Henri. O God! it is not life that I demand of

you—it is not an extra sorry hour of existence that I require—this you know! But before I die, make me the instrument of your vengeance, and I will bless your name!

[*Enter Angèle.*]

Angèle. Henri! you there?

Henri. Angèle!

Angèle. My mother told me to join you here; she has this moment come in, accompanied by the notary. Good God! all is then decided!

Henri. Poor child!

Angèle. Thus it is to you, M. Muller, that I am indebted for being a happy mother, if I be not a happy wife.

Henri. If you be not a happy wife, Angèle? This marriage, were it accomplished, would it not have realized your felicity?

Angèle. My felicity! Ah, no—happiness was the guardian of my younger years—now it has flown with those years.

Henri. Still, Angèle, there is happiness in love.

Angèle. And you think that Alfred loves me?

Henri. You love him—yourself—

Angèle. Henry, if the dishonour of my fault had alone appertained to me—if, in its effects, it had not redounded to my mother and child—

Henri. Proceed.

Angèle. I swear to you, my friend, that I would prefer dishonour—aye, death—to becoming the wife of that man.

Henri. What do you say, Angèle?

Angèle. I say that I have only one moment when I can weep—I have but one friend to whom I can confide all my sorrow—that moment is this—that friend is you. Oh! now my tears suffocate me, Henri—Oh! let me weep!

Henri. Yes—weep, Angèle—weep—

Angèle. Oh! what future evils any connexion with that man seems to prognosticate—if one may judge by the past.

Henri. Yet you have loved him—you, so pure, so chaste, so candid. And no voice from on high whispered caution in your ear—no heavenly hand withdrew the veil from your eyes—when that demon approached you.

Angèle. Ah! yes—yes—do not question the goodness of the Almighty: it was fascination—it was not love!

Henri. You, Angèle—you say those words—you have not loved him! Oh! this cannot be!

Angèle. To-day only have I correctly examined

the secret of my heart: since my mother made a fatal revelation—

Henri. What revelation? what secret?

Angèle. Ah! you will never know it, Henri—for the secret is not mine. I said, that since that secret was told me, a cloud has been dissipated from my eyes. My misfortune was a result of a charm, a fascination, a surprise: but I repeat to you—Oh! I repeat with sincerity—that I never loved him—and I am proud of it.

• *Henri.* My God! my God! am I then so wretched? Am I so persecuted?

Angèle. You, Henri!

Henri. (*falling upon a chair*). Oh! for a single hour of her love! My God! you may at least grant me that! Is an hour of happiness too much in my wretched life? And I should have died so happily, if she had only once said, “Henri, I love thee!” For I have loved you, Angèle; oh, how I have loved you with passion, with fervour, with delirium—and I have concealed that love in my bosom—and I have suffered my heart to be devoured with it! Ah, Angèle—Angèle—(*He weeps*).

Angèle. You forget that I am about to become the wife of Alfred d’Alvimar.

Henri. Oh! no—if Heaven be just, that cannot take place.

Angèle. How?

Alfred (entering the room). I am ready, Sir.

Henri. You have been a long time—too long—too long for me.

Alfred. My pistols were charged: I was obliged to draw one of them.

Henri. You yourself?

Alfred. You will choose.

Henri (withdrawing). 'Tis well.

Angèle. Whither are you going?

Henri. Put up a prayer to the Almighty.

Angèle. For whom?

Henri. For yourself.—I am prepared, Sir.

With these words Alfred d'Alvimar and Henri Muller leave the apartment together, as Madame de Gaston and a notary enter it. The notary seats himself at a table, and commences the marriage contract. Some conversation takes place between Angèle and her mother, which is suddenly interrupted by the report of a pistol. The two unfortunate females utter ejaculations of horror, and rush to the table where the notary is seated. Presently

Henri Muller enters the room, pale, weak, and feeble. The notary demands the name of the husband—and Henri Muller, hitherto unperceived, declares that he himself is the intended husband of Angèle, and that he acknowledges her child as his own. It were useless to describe the astonishment of Angèle and her mother at this unprecedented instance of generosity; and a lament on the part of Henri, that his pulmonary complaint should be making such fatal ravages as to prevent him from long enjoying the society of his bride, concludes the piece.

CHAPTER VII.

AUGUSTE RICARD.

THIS celebrated imitator,—though by no means a servile one,—of Pigault Lebrun and Paul de Kock, is one of the most celebrated of French novelists. His works are more correctly described as pictures of Frenchmen and manners than even those of his great prototypes. He seldom seeks for scenes or characters in the glittering world of fashion; in enumerating his heroes, we have only to categorise the titles of his principal novels; viz., *Le Portier* (The Porter), *La Grisette* (The Milliner), *Le Cocher de Fiacre* (The Hackney-Coachman), *La Vivandière*

(The Camp-Sutler), *Le Chauffeur** (The Bandit), *La Sage Femme* (The Midwife), *L'Ouvreuse des Loges* (The Box-Keeper), *Le Forçat Libéré* (The Freed Convict), *Le Marchand de Coco* (The Coco-Seller), &c. &c. Nearly all these works have extended to a second or third edition; and as in France the number of copies, of which the first edition of a book by a popular author consists, generally amounts to two thousand, the interest created by a new novel must be great indeed to cause a reprint even a first time.

If the individual, who has never visited France, but who is desirous of understanding somewhat of the characters of those of whom he daily hears so much, will but undertake the perusal of the novels of Auguste Ricard, so soon as he understands the slightest smattering of the language, he will at once, although at a distance, obtain an immense insight into the particulars of Parisian society. Notwithstanding Ricard's principal powers of description extend to the lower orders of society, he will still be found at his ease in the drawing-room, and his

* Literally, *The Warmer or Burner*. This species of robber was so called from the circumstance of his placing his victims upon the fire, *d la Turpin*, to compel them to discover their property.

acquaintance with the nobility is as great as his intimacy with the simple artizan or the mechanic. He is, moreover, a skilful delineator of female as well as male attire; and if he introduce his reader to a countess, he shows as much taste in describing her silks, her ostrich plumes, and her tiara of precious stones, as he does in detailing the figured cotton gown, the modest cap, and the simple chaplet of flowers, which adorn the humble graces of the little milliner. He has one talent greatly in his favour; and that is a power of making his reader acquainted on a first introduction with all the peculiarities and characteristics of his heroes and heroines. They do but open their mouths to utter one phrase, and their minds and dispositions are revealed at once. He is not tedious in his descriptions; because he makes the people, whom he presents upon the stage of his volumes, speak for and describe themselves. Hence may his novels be considered a species of drama; and it is this style of writing which the generality of the French so much admire.

The wit of Ricard does not extract violent shouts of laughter; but it produces an excellence of humour and a flow of spirits which far excel those occasional and evanescent bursts of hilarity. His

very style is a continuous vein of humour, as little varied by any extraordinary flight as by any degree of dullness. And still it is not a sameness that fatigues or surfeits: it is a peculiar talent, made much of in the hands of this writer.

The principal objection which, as impartial critics, we must offer to the works of Auguste Ricard, is that many of them, though apparently possessing one single thread of continuous narrative, are nothing more than a variety of episodes strangely strung and connected together. Especially does this remark apply to the *Grisette*, to *Florval*, and to the *Sage Femme*. We might even have included *L'Ouvreuse des Loges* in the category. Each of these books is as disjointed as the "Seven Champions of Christendom." It is true that they all possess a certain connecting link; but it is nevertheless a fact, that they might barter and interchange episodes and incidents with each other, and the work of interpolation would not be discovered. Indeed, we find it difficult, after a perusal of *Le Marchand de Coco*, which is regular and uniform in its plan, to turn to the *Grisette*, and persuade ourselves that they were both written by the same author.

The works of Ricard—and they are numerous—

form a most complete library or encyclopædia of sketches of French manners and customs. They introduce the reader into the cold attic, where the milliner is toiling late at night, and early in the morning—by the light of a flickering candle, or beneath the uncertain rays of the incipient dawn—to earn that sorry pittance which scarcely affords means to pay the rent of her chamber and allow her necessaries to support existence; and yet that young *grisette* is lively and happy as the bird perched on the leads outside her window; and when she hears a well-known step—the foot-step of her lover—approaching her door, she feels her heart leap within her, and her lips wear as sweet a smile as the lips of any high-born lady of the *Chaussée d'Antin* or the *Faubourg Saint Germain*. From the attic of the *grisette*, M. Ricard transports his audience to the office of the clerk in the *Ministère des Finances*, and points out the exactitude with which the chief clerk disposes his paper, his pens, his knife, his sand, his wafers, his wax, and his ink upon his desk: his very thoughts are scanned by this acute observer. Thence is the reader suddenly borne away to the dwelling of the misanthrope;—that misanthrope, who has collected all his fortunes into one mass of specie, and divided the glittering

heap of silver into the little sums necessary for each day's expenditure. And luxuriously and well does he live so long as the coin thus partitioned lasts: and he declares within himself that when the treasure is exhausted, he shall be found with his brains blown out, an empty champagne bottle on one side, and a pullet, the two wings of which shall be missing, on the other!

From the apartment of the misanthrope, M. Ricard leads the way to the theatre. He introduces his readers behind the scenes, describes to them the mysteries of the place, and then leaves the box-keeper (an assiduous and bustling female) to tell the tale of intrigue, of love, of adultery, of incontinence, and of prostitution, which she can unfold so well! He then hastens to the *boudoir* of the actress—the favoured actress, whose waiting-room is thronged with admirers—whose coffers are filled with the treasures of her lovers—whose hands are laden with the rings which have been proffered to her by amorous marquises and received favourites of all ranks and ages—and whose voluptuous form is negligently stretched upon a splendid ottoman, near which stands the aunt who originally sold her niece's charms to the highest bidder, and the abigail who

now panders to all the loose desires and unholy wishes of the fallen girl.

From this scene of luxuriousness and guilty enjoyment—where sweet perfumes and the odours of rare flowers intoxicate the senses, as the sparkling champagne excites the imagination—M. Ricard continues his duty as *chaperon* through the mazes of Paris, and conducts the stranger to the silent, mysterious and extensive abode of the midwife. In that dwelling each chamber can tell a tale of a wife's incontinence, during the absence of her unsuspecting husband, and of a maiden's frailty which the world must never know. From that house has many an innocent babe been borne to the turning-box of the foundling hospital, and deprived of a mother's cares to be cast upon the mercies and sympathies of hireling strangers !

Leaving the house of mystery and shame behind, M. Ricard, like another Asmodeus, carries his attentive pupil to a mansion, and points to a young man, who, to appearance, has everything to contribute to his felicity and comfort. That young man loves and is beloved; he is possessed of a competency; he is respected, and treated by those with whom he lives in a manner the most confidential

and kind. And yet a snake is gnawing at the heart of that young man; and the untimely wrinkle upon his brow, and the start which he gives each time a stranger addresses him, denote the existence of a sorrow deeply seated in his bosom. Watch him but for an hour; and an individual, of rough and uncouth appearance, accosts and threatens him; and the young man gives him gold to depart and molest him not, at least for a season. M. Ricard will explain the secret of this strange drama. That young man, for a boyish freak, was condemned to the galleys: he bears the indelible mark of the burning iron upon his shoulder;—he was liberated from captivity, but his companion at the horrid place of chastisement has followed and tracked him out, and threatens to ruin all his schemes of love and of prosperity unless large bribes be from time to time forthcoming to purchase silence.

Turning away from this scene of distress, M. Ricard suddenly flies to the gloomy forest, and mingles fearlessly with the banditti that haunt those wild recesses. From them he learns terrible tales of murder, robbery, villany, and crime; and yet in many of the members of that lawless horde he discovers noble sentiments and feelings, for the existence of which he is overjoyed to give them credit in

his history of their lives. From the forest he returns to Paris, and mixes with the gay crowds which throng the Boulevards to hear the evening lay of some sweet songstress; and thence he repairs to the *boudoir* of the noble and aristocratic widow, whom love has involved in intrigue, and intrigue in disgrace. But we must follow this admirable writer no further in his ramble of observation, or we shall destroy the interest which the reader will feel upon a more intimate acquaintance with his writings.

Three publishers have generally united in the purchase and issue of Ricard's works; and the sums he has received from them at different periods have enabled him to live with that ease and even luxury which his original condition as a subaltern officer in the French army could never have ensured him. His style is easy and agreeable; he is less farcical in his descriptions than Paul de Kock, but he possesses a more lasting vein of humour. The situations in which he places his heroes are not improbable nor absurd; and therefore perhaps they are a spice less interesting than those dilemmas in which the buoyant and inventive imagination of Paul de Kock involves the puppet-creations of his brain. Ricard's novels are full of details and phraseology which especially depict a certain class of the inhabitants of Paris.

His relatives were all devoted to the military profession which he himself abandoned for the more lucrative one of author ; but even in those scenes that savour most of the locality in which the writer delights, may occasionally be recognised the latent flame which the noble mind of a Frenchman can never entirely subdue. Thus in the commencement of the *Grisette*, and throughout *Florval*, have we bursts of military ardour which distinguish the admirer of the *Grand Homme*, and which bear ample testimony to the struggle that must have taken place in his mind when he contemplated the resignation of the epaulette and a peaceful recourse to his pen.

The extract we purpose to lay before the reader is taken from *Le Marchand de Coco*, and must be prefaced by stating in a few words that the coco-seller,* accompanied by Mademoiselle Ursule Gargarisme—his friend, Marie—his adopted daughter, and two or three actors of the Gaité-theatre, visits the seminary at which Ferdinand, his son, has been educated by a subscription made for the purpose by the aforesaid actors. We shall therefore at once proceed to relate the amusing episode of

* *Coco* is a summer drink, much used by the low classes in France, and is made of a decoction of liquorice root and sugar.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRIZES.

The pedagogue received the actors with a pleasing variety of bows and smiles, which conduct was very natural—inasmuch as they paid for Ferdinand's education. A light repast was served up to the guests, who did ample honour to it; and this was not very difficult, as it merely consisted of fruits and weak wine-and-water.

"Never mind the stinginess of the luncheon," said he who enacted the hero of the stage; "let us only have a little patience, and after the ceremony we will make up for it at the neighbouring inn."

"That's it!" exclaimed Plumet, the coco-vender; "but recollect, I stand treat."

"Certainly," said Ursule, simpering; "we will have a *pic-nic*, and I'll help to keep up your spirits; I've got seven francs and a half in my reticule."

During the collation, the parents of the other children in the school kept themselves at a distance from the actors and Jacques Plumet. This may be easily explained:—those parents were for the most part rich merchants or tradesmen who were already thinking of their second bankruptcy and the half a million of francs they would amass by it; and the

others were pious ladies of the Faubourg St. Germain, who had only three lovers at a time.

There were also a few bailiffs who had enriched themselves by the misery of the poor, and two or three accountants who treated themselves with a glass coach and a trip to St. Cloud or Versailles regularly once a month. It may therefore be well understood that individuals of such importance would scarcely mix with a poor coco-vender in his Sunday's garb, or a parcel of immoral comedians; particularly as Mademoiselle Gargarisme, according to her unblushing custom, committed two or three grammatical errors in a stentorian voice, which called a smile to every lip.

The unsuspecting Plumet, whispering in the ear of the "hero," asked what they were laughing at?

"At that tall lady who is with you," was the reply.

"And what has she done, then?"

"She said *dewoured* instead of *ate*."

"Well—what harm is there in that, if so be she makes herself understood? Besides, as the proverb says, 'We ain't hanged because we're ignorant.'"

And as he uttered these words, he cast a menacing look towards the aristocratic portion of the company; while Ursule, who spoke with the confi-

dence of one believing that all she says is excellent, exclaimed, " Why ! M. Plumet—you are serious all of a sudden ! and yet *to-day* is a happy *day* for you my friend !"

And the hilarity increased. The natural good sense of Jacques Plumet convinced him that Ursule had just uttered another stupidity, and he laboured hard to make her hold her tongue. But garrulity was an indispensable aliment to the happiness of the tall lady ; and, regardless of Plumet's telegraphic signs, she continued in her usual strains, to the great diversion of the company.

A harsh and discordant strain at this moment attracted general attention to another quarter. The scholars were the musicians ; and the music itself was intended as a signal that the ceremony was about to commence. The company accordingly hastened to the school-room, where a sort of stage had been erected at one end, and on which was a table groaning beneath the weight of the stereotyped volumes that formed the prizes. At the table the master himself was placed in becoming state ; and, when his audience was fairly seated on the chairs and benches provided for such accommodation, he coughed, blew his nose, arranged his shirt-frill, took a pinch of snuff, and began a *Latina*

discourse which he read from a large roll of papers before him.

No sooner had he commenced his harangue, than the fathers, uncles, and brothers of the scholars affected to listen with attention, and occasionally to make signs of approbation to each other, as if they understood every syllable the pedagogue was reading; while the mothers, the aunts, and the sisters gaped as if they were armed against lock-jaw; and the young rhetoricians whispered amongst themselves, "Ah! he has taken that sentence from the *Pro Milone*;" or, "Oh! I recollect this in the *De Senectute*."

An evil genius—or accident—I know not which—so willed it, that Jacques Plumet was seated near the stage, from which the Latinist rained his eloquence in torrents upon the audience beneath. Jacques did not pretend to listen because he well knew that he should not understand a word; but Ursule, with her eyes half shut and her head reclining on one shoulder, appeared to pay the greatest attention to all that was going on, and thus afforded food for renewed mirth to the company present. Seeing that the ladies gaped, and that the gentlemen began to manifest unequivocal signs of impatience—

animated by the courage he derived from certain cups of wine which he had prudently sneaked out to drink at the neighbouring tavern every now and then—and moreover excited by the “hero” and the “king,” who, as they each took a pinch of snuff, declared “that the Latin harangue was sufficient to send them all to sleep for a fortnight,”—Jacques, urged by such weighty inducements, was determined to do something desperate to stop the current of the pedagogue’s eloquence.

He accordingly rose in haste from his seat, and leapt upon the stage as gently as possible, so that he was unperceived by the orator, who was too much engrossed by his discourse to remark the movements of the vender of coco.

“I say, old boy,” exclaimed Jacques Plumet, inflicting a violent blow upon the ribs of the school-master; “do you know that all that rigmarole thing you’re reading there is most infernally stupid?”

“Sir!” cried the pedagogue, rubbing his side with amazing vehemence, and blushing up to the eyes through excess of indignation, “your conduct is as rude as it is unaccountable!”

“Ah! now we have something in the language we all understand,” replied the individual whose

worldly interests were all vested in decoctions of liquorice and water ; " I like that much better than your cursed Latin, old fellow."

" Now, Sir,—will you have the kindness to resume your seat, and allow me to continue my discourse ?"

" By no manner of means, my worthy gentleman. Continue, indeed ! to send us all to sleep like the seven sleepers themselves ! For God's sake, chuck away that conjuring-book, and distribute amongst those urchins the volumes they're anxiously waiting for. That'll oblige their fathers and mothers much more than all those cursed long words ending in *us*, which none of 'em understand ;—with these words, the heroic Jacques Plumet seized upon the manuscript, and endeavoured to wrest it from the grasp of the schoolmaster.

" Leave me alone, Sir," cried the discomfited pedagogue, making every effort to protect his dear scraps of Latinity ; but Jacques Plumet was invincible and inexorable.

" By the eternal God, I'll have it !" cried he in a voice worthy a Stentor.

" Bravo, Plumet ?" exclaimed the " hero ;"—
" you'll have it, my boy."

" No, he won't," cried the " fool."

" Yes, he will," roared the " gentleman comedian."

"Here it is—the famous discourse!" thundered Plumet, raising it above his head in token of triumph; after which achievement, he quietly consigned it to his pocket, and descended from the stage to resume his seat; while the pedagogue, with his hair on end, his face the colour of purple, and his cravat in disorder, walked up and down the platform like a madman, to the inexpressible delight of all present, who never saw anything more comic than an irritated schoolmaster parading a stage composed of the four dining-tables of the scholars.

"Well, my good man," exclaimed Plumet, after a pause; "what I did, was a matter of pure friendship. You needn't on that account walk up and down those tables like a bear in his cage. Give the urchins their prizes, and then all will be right. I'll only appeal to the boys themselves, whether they won't like that better than the Latin dictionary."

"The prizes! the prizes!" exclaimed the parents and relatives of the scholars with one accord.

"Ladies and gentlemen," cried the master, "I will satisfy your wishes forthwith. It was my intention, previous to the distribution of those books, to have accomplished a discourse, which—"

"The prizes! the prizes!" interrupted the audience; and the tutor was compelled to make a

sign to indicate that he was about to obey, at the same time darting a terrible glance towards Jacques Plumet.

"He is up to some treacherous trick," murmured the speculator in coco. "Let us wait the result."

The master commenced with the last classes, upon which crowns and garlands rained in abundance, to the great joy of their parents and relations, who covered the young victors with kisses, and in many instances with snuff. At length the turn of the students in rhetoric arrived, and Jacques Plumet's heart beat audibly.

"The devil take it!" cried he, feeling the influence of emotions not easily defined operating in his breast: "I seem all no-how, so help me God! Perhaps it is because I didn't breakfast very well?"

"No," exclaimed the "hero" of the *Gaité*; "it isn't that—but it is because your paternal feelings are excited. I was just the same the day before yesterday, when my son received the prize at Saint-Barbe. We are but men after all, Plumet."

To this self-evident proposition the coco-seller immediately subscribed; and in a few minutes he perceived that the distribution had terminated, and that his son had received nothing. The rage of Plumet knew no bounds; the blood mounted to his

cheeks, and, without the smallest ceremony, he stopped the last scholar who left the stage with his books under his arm.

"I beg pardon little one," cried Jacques; "but two words with you, if you please."

"Four, if you like," returned the boy, holding the books above his head to display them to the view of his mother who was seated at the bottom of the room; but pray be quick, and let me go and kiss my dear—dear mamma."

"I won't keep you long, my boy," returned Plumet. "Only have the kindness to tell me whether Ferdinand Plumet is a good scholar or not? He has no prize—and so I suppose he did n't deserve any."

"Upon my honour," said the boy, "I don't care if I tell you the truth. My studies are now over; and I needn't fear any longer the *pensums* of the master. So I'll just let you into the secret of the thing. Ferdinand is almost always at the head of the class; and on this occasion the prize for Latin verses ought properly to be awarded to him."

"Thank you, my dear boy," said Plumet, with a nod expressive of gratitude. "Now go and kiss your dear mamma, and say I beg her pardon for having delayed you;"—and the scholar, with a

countenance of radiant joy, hastened to exhibit his books to his mother.

"Now," continued Jacques Plumet, "let us say a little, but say that little well."

The actors were unable to restrain their friend, who leapt a second time upon the stage, with his fists clenched, his face red with anger, and his person swelling with rage.

"Who has possessed himself of the prize, in the name of heaven?" demanded Plumet with a voice of thunder.

"Who has got it? who has got it?" cried a gaudily-dressed lady, with a false front; "it is my son, to be sure, vulgarian!"

"Oh! you may call me names—it is all the same to me; particularly as I have n't got time to answer you;"—and having uttered these words, he leapt from the stage to the ground, and hastened towards the scholar whose Christian name was Charles, and who sought protection by holding his mother's arms. "I want to see you books, my boy," cried Jacques, addressing the trembling youth.

"You shan't see them!" shrieked the mother, grinding her teeth, and exhibiting evident intentions of defending the volumes with her nails.

"I will see them!" roared Plumet, with a terrible oath.

"Help—help!" screamed the lady. "It is very evident that the master is a subscriber to the *Courrier Français*. There isn't even a Gendarme present to arrest all riotous people."

"You tell an atrocious falsehood," exclaimed the schoolmaster; "I never read any revolutionary prints. The *Quotidienne* is my paper!"

"The Gendarmes only arrest rascals," observed Jacques Plumet; "they leave honest men alone—and I am one."

"Charles, my darling, do not give up your books," cried the affectionate mother, whose shrieking voice drowned the accents of the rest of the company.

"Dear mamma," returned the boy, "he squeezes my hand so tight, I must let go."

"Never mind—only hold tight. Help! help!" cried the enraged lady.

Victorious a second time, Plumet wrested the volumes from the boy's hands.

"I only want to see something," said he very coolly; "and when I've done with them, I'll give 'em to you again; for they are of as much use to me as to a blind man."

Plumet opened the books—they formed four handsome volumes—and at length, having run his eye over a few pages in the middle, bethought himself of referring to the blank ones at the beginning. His scrutiny was crowned with success; the following words met his anxious glance:—"FIRST PRIZE FOR LATIN VERSES. FERDINAND PLUMET."

"My books! my books!" screamed the lady.

"You'll get them on Saint Sylvester's day," replied Plumet with an air of triumph. "Look here, ladies and gentlemen—here's a shame! Because I snatched an old heap of papers from the hands of that pedagogue there, whose silly nonsense was operating like poppies upon this amiable company, he goes and gives the prize destined for my Ferdinand to another. Where are you, my boy? Oh! there's your prize for you!"

"It is shameful—it is abominable, to give this young man's prize to another," exclaimed the greater portion of the audience.

"Because the master's angry with the father, he must needs revenge himself upon the son," cried the parent of one of the scholars present.

"Come along, my dear little mamma—let us leave this nasty place," whispered Charles to his mother, as he dragged her by the gown.

And the dear little mamma gave her darling Charles a couple of sound boxes upon the ears, crying in a loud voice, "Hold your tongue, you ugly monkey! This is the fourth year that you have gained nothing at all, you idle imp!"

"Let him apply to his studies, then," ejaculated the incensed pedagogue, "if he wants to get a prize."

"Oh! you confess that my son has gained nothing this year—do you?" continued the lady. "But what could he learn at such a school as your's, I should like to know? Come—walk on—Sir, said she, addressing herself to Charles, and urging him forward with another vehement blow on the head; "I'll take you away from this place; but depend upon it that you shall eat nothing but dry bread during the holidays. And as for you, Mister Pedagogue, I shall not suffer my son to return next half-year; he shall study his rhetoric elsewhere."

"Go to the devil," returned the master, blinded by his wrath, while the confusion became general.

Many other parents also intimated their intention of taking away their children; and those, who were thus determined, hastened to the laundry to count their sons' linen, and see that the twelve shirts, the three flannel-jackets, the six pairs of socks, and the two night-caps, belonging to each were safe.

"My Jules's kettle-drum," cried one lady.

"My son's top," exclaimed another.

"Edmund's box of soldiers," shrieked an aunt;
"you don't think I'm going to leave that behind—
do you?"

"I mean to take every thing away that belongs
to my little Auguste," menaced an uncle. "Where
are the cakes of soap he has n't used?"

"They belong to the house as perquisites," re-
turned the master.

"It is n't true, Sir," thundered the uncle. "You
made me pay fifteen sous a-piece last half-year, and
my wife said it was an infamous price. She never
gives more than twelve for her's. However—I've
paid for them, and I'll have them."

Jacques Plumet, the cause of all this disorder,
suffered the crowd of relations to act as they chose,
while he hugged Ferdinand, Ursule, the "hero," the
"gentleman comedian," the "fool," the "king," and
his adopted daughter, one after another in rapid
succession.

"It is to you, my worthy friends," said he, ad-
dressing himself to the actors, "and to your excel-
lent comrades, that I am indebted for this happi-
ness; in spite of that thundering thief who wanted

to swindle us out of the books. But I suspected what he was up to."

"Paternal presentiments are never deceived," said Ursule with dignity.

Plumet intimated to the schoolmaster that his son was now sufficiently versed in general knowledge, and that he would not return to the seminary; whereupon the pedagogue politely requested both him and Ferdinand to undertake a small journey to the devil—an invitation which they declined for the more agreeable purpose of dining together at the neighbouring tavern.

CHAPTER VIII.

 PROSPER MERIMÉE.

NUMEROUS have been the disputes and dissertations relative to the subject of whether *Gil Blas* were an original work by M. Le Sage, or merely a translation or adaptation from the Spanish. The same question has been mooted with respect to Macpherson's "Ossian;" and the *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, by M. Merimée, has undergone a similar ordeal. It has been argued, particularly upon the faith which was attached to the author's preface, that this work was merely a translation from the Spanish; and even the French critics themselves undertook to prove the fact. But the truth was sooner or later made apparent; and that, which

Prosper Mérimée advanced as an innocent falsehood in jest, soon ceased to be believed in earnest. And then, when the secret was retained no longer, and the mystery was solved, those same critics pretended that none but an idiot could have been deceived by the book, inasmuch as its contents were lively, gay, sprightly, and witty, instead of melancholy, delicate, and passionate like the Spanish romance. In the meantime M. Mérimée laughed at both critics and readers; for the truth is that he did not expect the statement, which he jestingly made in his preface, to be taken in such sober and downright earnest.

Under similar circumstances, *La Guzla* and *La Jacquerie* were issued to the world; but they failed to excite half the sensation which attended the publication of the volumes relating to the Spanish actress. *La Chronique du Règne de Charles IX.* established the reputation of Mérimée as a great writer; and his success was fully ratified by the *Mosaïque*.

The *Mosaïque* is a collection of tales which, as a whole, fully merit their singular title. There is not a line in these strange volumes, which does not express a passion or a feeling: there is not a sentence which does not awaken both. That terrible tale of the murder of a son by his father, as a meet sacrifice to the violated rights of hospitality—*Mateo Falcone*—is

already too well known to the English to need elaborate notice here. The temptations to which the Corsican's son is exposed—first by the glittering coin of the wounded bandit; and then by the watch of the Gendarme—the emotions of the father on his return to the cottage, when he discovers what has passed—the contempt with which the robber spat upon the threshold of the door, with only the single observation of “House of a traitor!”—and the fearful calmness exhibited by Mateo Falcone, when he tells his son to follow him to that ravine whence the unhappy boy never returns—then the dialogue between the father and the young victim, and the prayers of the latter—all these incidents are told in a language, so concise—and so laconic, and at the same time so forceful and pathetic, the very breath is suspended during a perusal of the tale.

Frederigo—another paper in the *Mosaïque*—is too singular to be absolutely blasphemous, and too interesting as a specimen of ancient legend to escape without notice. In this wild romance, the Saviour of mankind and his twelve disciples are introduced together with Pluto and Mors: it is a species of pantomime, in which ancient and Christian mythology are strangely jumbled together. Our regard

for the religious scruples of our fellow-countrymen alone prevents us from laying an analysis of *Fredérigo* before our readers.

Le Vase Etrusque, also to be found in the collection we have before alluded to, is a tale without much incident, or rather with only one; but it added considerably to the reputation of M. Merimée. It was read with enthusiasm in every *boudoir* throughout Paris: not because its leading passion was jealousy, and its end tragic—nor on account of the delicacy with which the loves of the young hero and the beauteous heroine are depicted; but because Parisian society was there sketched in fine words. Those fine words expressed the meaning of volumes: the conversation of the party of young fashionables at the Café, their scandal, and the fatal results produced by an idle word, are so admirably drawn on a small piece of canvass, but in such glowing colours, that the effect produced by the combination was instantaneous. The letters from Spain, which form a species of supplement to the *Mosaïque*, are also full of incident and interest. We might have transferred one of these letters to our pages, or should willingly have selected *Mateo Falcone*; but we have reason to believe that those papers have been already

translated into English by other hands and at different times. *Le Vase Etrusque* is also more adapted for the meridian of Paris than that of London.

Few French authors possess so great a facility of investing a trifling anecdote with a considerable degree of interest as Merimée. He is an acute observer of the human passions and feelings, and has a deep insight into the private characters of men. His delineations are consequently forcible, without being tediously minute, and his imagination is vivid and varied; his principal works besides the *Mosaïque*, the *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, and the *Chronique du Règne de Charles IX*, are the *Double Méprise*, and *Notes d'un Voyage dans le Midi de la France*. The *Mosaïque* shall however afford us a specimen of this author's abilities.

THE STORMING OF THE REDOUBT.

One of my friends, an officer, who died of the fever in Greece a few years ago, one day related to me the particulars of the first engagement in which he bore a part. The recital struck me to be so extraordinary, that I committed it to paper as soon as I had time. It was as follows:

"I joined my regiment in the evening of the 4th of September, and found the Colonel at bivouac.

He at first received me with a coldness which he did not attempt to conceal; but when he had perused the letter of introduction which General B—— had given me, his manners underwent a sudden change, and he addressed me in a way the most condescending and polite.

“I was presented by him to my captain, who returned at that moment from reconnoitring the position of the enemy. This officer, whom I had scarcely time to become acquainted with, was a tall stout man, with a dark complexion, and an expression of countenance at once repulsive and displeasing. He had risen from the ranks, and had gained his epaulettes and his cross of the Legion of Honour on the field of battle. His voice, which was hoarse and weak, contrasted singularly with the gigantic proportions of his person. I was told that this change in his voice was occasioned by a ball which he received in the throat at the battle of Jena.

“When he heard that I was just come from the Military College of Fontainebleau, he made a slight grimace, and said, ‘My lieutenant died yesterday!’

“I understood that he intimated, by these words, —‘And you are to replace him, but you are not able!’

"A suitable answer was upon my lips, but I fortunately suppressed it.

"The moon was behind the redoubt of Cheverino, a strong-hold situate at a distance of about a cannon's range from our place of bivouac. She was large and red as usual; although on this occasion her size appeared to be increased, and her glare more portentous than ordinary. For a moment the redoubt seemed like a black spot upon the glowing disk of the moon, and resembled the cone of a volcano at the period of its eruption.

"An old soldier, near whom I was standing, remarked the colour of the moon.

"'It is very red,' said he, 'and this is a sort of presage of the terrible work which will take place before we can storm that redoubt.'

"I was always superstitious; and a prophecy, at such a crisis, made a deep impression upon me. I lay down, but could not sleep. I rose again, and walked up and down for a short time, looking at the immense range of fires which covered the heights beyond the village of Cheverino.

"When I thought that the fresh air of the night had sufficiently cooled my blood, I returned near my own fire, and having enveloped myself carefully in

my large cloak, shut my eyes with the hope of not opening them before daylight. But as I began to doze, my thoughts almost imperceptibly assumed a sombre hue. I recollected that amongst the hundred thousand men who covered the plain, I had not one single friend. If I were wounded, I should be carried to a hospital, and left to the mercy of surgeons who had never seen me before, and who could not feel the slightest interest in my fate. And then all that I had been told of surgical operations rushed to my memory. My heart beat with violence; and almost mechanically did I arrange my pocket-book and my handkerchief so as to form a species of cuirass upon my chest. At length fatigue overcame me,—I fell into a sort of uneasy slumber,—and at every moment some unpleasant reflection returned with renewed force, and awoke me with a start, so that when the morning watch and the *reveil* sounded, I was not refreshed by my repose.

“We were soon ranged in order of battle, and every moment awaited the command to march to the attack. But in a short time the ranks were ordered to pile arms, and everything seemed to announce to us that we were to pass a quiet day.

“Towards three o’clock, an aid-de-camp arrived

with despatches. The ranks were ordered to resume their arms,—the rifle corps proceeded a-head,—we followed it gently,—and at the expiration of twenty minutes we saw all the Russian advanced posts defile and turn into the redoubt.

“A battery of artillery was formed upon our right hand, and another upon our left. They soon commenced a terrible cannonade upon the enemy, who, however, returned the compliment with equal energy; and in a few moments the redoubt was lost among the thick clouds of smoke.

“Our regiment was almost entirely protected from the fire of the enemy by a rising ground. The Russian balls passed over our heads, annoying us only with the dirt and small stones which they threw up.

“So soon as the order of march had been issued, my captain scanned me with such attention that I was obliged to pass my hand two or three times over my germinating mustachis, and assume an air of as great a recklessness as possible. Besides, I was not alarmed at any real danger: the only thing which terrified me was the idea of being deemed a coward. The inoffensive balls of the Russians also contributed to aid me in maintaining a heroic calmness; and

although I was in imminent danger, being under the fire of a battery, my pride prevented me from demonstrating the slightest symptoms of alarm. In fine, I was delighted at the fact of my preserving my presence of mind on so trying an occasion; and I longed for the time to come when I should be able to relate the storming of the redoubt of Cheverino in the salon of Madame de B —, at her magnificent abode, Rue de Provence.

“The colonel passed down the ranks of our company, and addressed himself to me.

“‘Well my dear boy,’ said he, ‘you are about to have some rare sport by way of initiation.’

“I smiled with an expression as martial as I could render it; and brushed from the sleeve of my coat a little dust which a cannon ball, that had passed over my head a few moments previously, had scattered upon us.

“It appears that the Russians became aware of the futility of their cannonade upon our division of the army, for they speedily commenced a tremendous fire with immense howitzers which could more easily reach us in the hollows that protected us. In the course of a few moments my shako was struck from my head and a man killed at my side.

" 'I congratulate you,' said the captain, addressing himself to me, as I picked up my shako: 'you are safe for the rest of the day.'

"I was well aware of the superstitious belief prevalent amongst military men, that the axiom *non bis in idem* may find its realization as well upon the field of battle as in a court of justice; and I placed my cap upon my head with a smile of triumph.

" 'The Russians compel me to salute them, *no-lens volens*,' said I as gaily as I could.

"This execrable joke, when the circumstances under which it was uttered are considered, appeared to be excellent and of the very first merit.

" 'Once again I felicitate you,' observed the captain. 'You will not be touched again to day; and in the course of a very short time you will command a company: this evening, perhaps—for I perceive that the furnace is being heated for us. Every time that I have been wounded, the officer next to me has received a mortal wound; and,' he added in a low tone of voice, which a sentiment of shame rendered more feeble than usually was the case, 'their names always began with P.'

"I made no remark, but reflected upon the singularity of the captain's observations; for I was peculiarly struck by the prophetic manner in which

they were delivered. In the situation in which I was placed, I felt that I had no friend to whom I could confide my secret thoughts; and I perceived the necessity of maintaining the most rigid composure.

“At the expiration of half an hour, the Russian cannonade evidently began to diminish; and we hastened from our entrenchments to march upon the redoubt.

“Our regiment was composed of three battalions. The second was ordered to carry the redoubt by storm, and the two others to cover the assault. I myself was in the third battalion.

“On issuing from behind the species of demi-bastion which had protected us, we were received with several discharges of musketry, which however did but little harm in our ranks. The hissing of the balls surprised me; and frequently did I turn my head, more from actual habit than momentary fear. But my behaviour drew upon me a thousand jokes on the part of my comrades, who were more familiar with such scenes than I.

“‘After all,’ said I to myself, ‘a battle is not so terrible a thing.’

“We advanced at quick march towards the walls of the redoubt, preceded by the rifle corps and bri-

gade; when suddenly the Russians gave three 'hurrahs!'—three distinct 'hurrahs!' and remained silent; nor did they fire a single shot.

" 'I do not like that silence,' said the Captain: 'it does not augur any thing good.'

" And yet, with all his superstition, the man was as bold and desperate as a lion, and dreaded not to meet death face to face.

" It was then that I observed the contrast between the shouts and the excitement on the part of the French army, and the death-like silence which prevailed on that of the Russians.

" In a very short time we arrived at the foot of the redoubt, the *chevaux de frise* of which had been broken and the *glacis* torn up by the cannon-balls. The soldiers rushed upon those newly made ruins, with loud cries of 'Long live the Emperor!' and the fervour of their acclamations seemed to proclaim the righteousness of their cause.

" I raised my eyes—and never shall I forget the scene which met my glance. The volumes of smoke were concentrated about twenty feet above the *terre-pleine* of the redoubt; and through the blueish vapour which hovered between that dense mass and the earth, might be discerned the Russian grenadiers upon the parapets of the fortifications. I

think that at this moment I see those soldiers—each with his left eye fixed upon us, and his right on the musket which he held on his shoulder pointed against us. In an *embrasure* at a little distance from us, was a man holding a match at the touch-hole of an enormous cannon.

“I shuddered—for I thought my last hour was come.

“ ‘The amusement is now about to commence!’ cried my captain. ‘Good night!’

“These were the last words I ever heard him pronounce.

“The rolling of drums resounded from the redoubt. I saw all the muskets suddenly point their muzzles to the ground—and then we marched onwards once again for a few paces. Stern and decided is the advance of a French armament. I shut my eyes—and suddenly a terrible din assailed my ears—and loud cries and groans mingled their sad sounds with the military music of our corps. I opened my eyes, surprised to find myself in the land of the living. The redoubt was again enveloped in smoke. I was surrounded by the dead and the dying. My captain lay stretched at my feet—his head had been split open by a cannon ball, and my uniform was covered with his brains and his blood. Of all the

company which he had commanded, there only remained alive, six men and myself.

“ To that carnage succeeded a moment of stupor. The colonel, having placed his hat upon the top of his sabre, was the first to climb the parapet, crying ‘ Long live the Emperor !’ He was instantly followed by all the survivors of his regiment. I can scarcely call to mind all that immediately ensued. We entered into the redoubt, I know not how. Russians and Frenchmen fought, the former three to one against the latter, in the midst of a thick smoke in which none could distinguish his foe. I think that I must have dealt some blows, for my sword was covered with blood. At length I heard the cry of ‘ Victory !’—and when the density of the smoke diminished, I perceived that the ground was covered with the slain and wounded. Especially were the cannon encumbered by heaps of dead bodies. Upwards of two hundred men in the French uniform were grouped together upon the parapet, exchanging muskets, trying on bayonets, and charging their pieces anew. Eleven Russian prisoners were in the midst of them.

“ The colonel was stretched bleeding upon a broken wagon near the entrance of the redoubt. Se-

veral soldiers crowded around him ; and I amongst the rest approached my revered commander.

“ ‘ Where is the senior captain ? ’ he demanded of the serjeant-major.

“ The serjeant shrugged his shoulders, but made no reply.

“ ‘ And the senior lieutenant ? ’

“ ‘ This gentleman, who joined us yesterday, ’ answered the serjeant in a calm tone of voice.

“ The colonel smiled bitterly.

“ ‘ Now then, sir, ’ said he, ‘ you must take the command of the regiment. Fortify the entrance to the redoubt with the baggage waggons, for the enemy is still strong. General C—— will support us.’

“ ‘ But you Colonel, ’ said I, ‘ are dangerously wounded.’

“ ‘ May the devil take the wound, my dear boy, ’ was his reply ; ‘ since the redoubt is carried.’ ”

CHAPTER IX.

PAUL DE KOCK.

WE now come to an author who has enjoyed, and still enjoys, more celebrity than any living writer; that is to say, if the extent of a man's reputation be judged by the number of his readers. From the highest lady in her luxurious *boudoir*, to the poorest *grisette* in her miserable attic,—from the lordly paladin in his spacious library, to the obsequious porter in his narrow lodge,—from the statesman who mounts the tribune in the Chamber of Deputies, to the copying clerk in the attorney's office,—from the Colonel of the regiment, to the private sentinel in the ranks,—all have perused the novels of this distinguished writer—all classes have

pored over those pages which teem with gaiety and mirth, relieved by the finest touches of pathos and feeling—all have felt the magic charm of this great enchanter! A new novel by Paul de Kock creates a more powerful sensation than the speech of the King himself; and on the day of publication, not a diligence, not a mail, not a public conveyance leaves the French metropolis without bearing to the country librarians of all parts a package of the anxiously-awaited volumes. There is not a circulating-library throughout France that does not possess one or more complete sets of his works: there is not a news-room where, amongst the few dozens of standard books which grace the little shelf in the corner, the novels of Paul de Kock are not to be found. His popularity extends to the meanest and most distant cottage in the empire: there exists not a labourer, who tills the land in the remotest province, that has not heard of Paul de Kock, and laughed at some village pedant's recital of the best episode in his last work.

Mount the *imperial* of the diligence, and the *Conducteur* will talk to you of Paul de Kock. Converse with the *filles du comptoir* in a Café, and she will ask you to lend her his lately published novel. Hire a *cabriolet de place*, and the driver will tell you that

he has just perused Paul de Kock's new work. Chatter with your porter's wife, when she brings you your newspaper in the morning, and she will call your attention to the critique of Paul de Kock's book in the *Feuilleton*. Speak to your cook relative to your dinner having been late the day before, and she will throw the blame upon Paul de Kock. Ask your friend why he broke his appointment, and the reply will be the same. In fine, M. Charles Paul de Kock engrosses public attention as much as the prices of the funds, the measures of the Ministers, or the war in Spain. He is a *Monsieur Tonsou* whose existence is interminable.

Nor is his popularity alone confined to France: it extends to every corner of Europe, where books are read. In religious—in strict—in domestic communities, are his works devoured with as much enthusiasm as they are by the indolent and luxurious Parisians; and we ourselves have seen more than one boarding-school Miss in France peruse a duodecimo volume of one of these fascinating novels at church instead of her prayer-book. The moment the English student acquires the slightest smattering of the French language, he applies himself to the perusal of the tales of Paul de Kock; and foreigners,

who cannot read three words of French, and who do not profess to keep French books, have Paul de Kock's *Œuvres Complètes* bound in their libraries.

But let it not be supposed that Paul de Kock can write nothing save humorous tales. His sentiment will frequently wring tears from the eyes. No one can peruse passages of *Sœur Anne*, *Frere Jacques*, or *La Laitiere de Montfermeil*, without experiencing the most tender emotions; but no lasting impression is made upon the mind by the scenes which M. de Kock thus envelops in pathos and melancholy, because the almost immediate occurrence of something excessively ludicrous effaces the reminiscence of the sentimental episode.

The wonderful imagination of Paul de Kock, and his astonishing powers of invention are not the least portions of his genius. There is nothing bordering upon sameness throughout his voluminous writings: incident is crowded upon incident—joke upon joke—farce upon farce, in rapid succession; his memory and his resources never fail him; he has a mine of literary wealth at his command; and all the riches he extracts from it are genuine and original. Upwards of seventy volumes of amusement and interest have emanated from the fertile pen of M. de

Kock; and the more he writes, the more vivid appears his imagination, and the more exuberant are his ideas.

He is moreover a fertilising genius, whose rich perfumes are imbibed and exhaled by others. He has a host of imitators; but as his style is peculiarly his own, few authors have succeeded in their attempts to appropriate it to themselves. Auguste Ricard, of whom we have already spoken, is the only one that has at all approached Paul de Kock in his own especial walk of literature; and he may be said to have nearly rivalled him. It will be recollected that in our notice of Ricard, we paid due honour to his genius as a pathetic writer, as well as a humourist; and as he and Paul de Kock generally resemble each other in the proportioning of their *quantum* of pathos to that of wit, the parallel that may be drawn between them becomes the more striking and the more perceptible.

In *Le Barbier de Paris* there are many admirable touches of deep feeling: the whole is a true picture of human life in those ages of chivalry and barbarism in which the scene is laid; and if Walter Scott consecrated the actions of the savage and licentious ruffians of the olden time, who were called "gentle knights," M. de Kock has not at least been guilty of

exaggeration in his picture of the good and bad qualities of ancient characters, morals, and manners. But as M. de Kock is one of the most important and most celebrated of French novelists, we shall proceed to examine his principal works in detail.

The writings of Paul de Kock are numerous. Amongst his best are *Le Barbier de Paris*, *Sœur Anne*, *Jean*, *L'Amant—le Mari—et la Femme*, *M. Dupont*, and *Le Cocu*. The first of these here enumerated is a romance somewhat in the Radcliffe style; treating of the adoption, by a barber, of a girl whose father is unknown, a secret source of wealth which the barber possesses, then a marquis, to whose vicious pleasures the barber is a pander. That marquis falls in love with Blanche, the adopted girl; an *enlèvement* necessarily succeeds, and the *dénoûment* of the tale elucidates the mysteries in the regular German fashion. Touquet, the barber, has murdered the supposed father of Blanche; and Blanche is the marquis's daughter. The last chapter is peculiarly interesting. Blanche is immured in a chamber in the marquis's country-house—the window of that chamber looks upon a lake; she is resolved how to act, should the nobleman dare attempt to force the door of her apartment, and she expects the succour of her lover Urban, who is

actually in the vicinity of the chateau. Presently the marquis approaches the door of her room; but it is to embrace her whom he has only a few moments ago discovered to be his child. Blanche trembles, but she has decided in her own mind what step to take. She fancies the intended ravisher of innocence is near, and she leaps from the window; the lake receives her beneath. Her lover, who is in the park, sees her fall and throws himself into the water. He succeeds in dragging her to the land; and at that moment the marquis, who had followed his daughter, swam also on shore. They endeavoured to recover her; the one implored her to open her eyes in the name of a parent, the other in that of a lover. But Blanche answered not—the vital spark had fled, and she remained a corpse between the two individuals who deplored her.

There is one very excellent character in the *Barbier de Paris*; it is the Chevalier Chaudoreille, who never opens his lips but to tell a lie. He is employed by the barber in a variety of ways, and universally endeavours to pass himself off as a great man. "Those women," said he, "those women, *cadédís !*" (his favourite oath) "are ruinous! *Sacrédié !* were it not for them I should be rich; but I ruin myself for their smiles. *Eh ! bien—*

never mind: I have only to look kindly with my killing eyes upon some duchess or dowager, and I can be bravely clad in a minute." This worthy gentleman is a native of Gascony, and of course as great a rogue as he is a liar. Paul de Kock is fond of lashing the failings of men through the *medium* of characters of this kind. He shows us the folly of assuming that which we are not entitled to; he represents the inconsistency of affecting the rich and the valiant, the gallant and the gay, when both pocket and stomach are empty. Chaudoreille, who proclaims himself a very *raffiné d'honneur*, is the greatest coward in the world. Hence may we learn to mistrust the empty vaunts and superficial boastings of those individuals who "have killed their man," or who "are ready to go out whenever they have an opportunity."

Sœur Anne is a most affecting tale. A poor dumb girl becomes the victim of the seducer's desires. The son and heir of a rich nobleman succeeds in possessing himself of her person, and although he faithfully remains near her during the first few weeks of illicit pleasure, circumstances oblige him eventually to return home to the paternal dwelling. Time wears away; he marries; and Sister Anne leaves her cottage, to go to Paris and seek her lover. A

thousand perils is she obliged to encounter ; a hundred difficulties is she condemned to experience. Her lover's wife is in the country ; she finds her way accidentally to the mansion of Constance, for that is the name of her successful rival, and by that rival she is received in friendship, in ignorance of who she is. Her lover is away from home ; he returns—then comes the sad *dénoûement* of the tale. Sister Anne has a child, the fruit of her illicit amour, and she and her infant sleep in a wing detached from the main body of the house. Her apartment catches fire—she is with her lover in the garden—the sight of the devouring flame unties her tongue—and, as an accident originally struck her dumb, so now a similar occurrence restores her long-lost faculty of speech. “My child—my child—oh ! save my child !” and the child *is* saved : but Sister Anne lives not to see it grow, nor to hear the word “Mother” fall from its lisping tongue—she dies in early youth, broken-hearted, and only consoled by the assurance of a paternal home for her child.

Dubourg in *Sœur Anne* is the parallel to Chaudoreille in *Le Barbier de Paris* ; but his character is, if anything, more amusing ; and the various shifts to which he and a poor tutor are reduced, in order to obtain wherewith to support life, the ridiculous

impositions put upon that tutor (Ménard) by Dubourg, and the infamous lies he is the author of, added to the dilemmas into which he works himself and his companions by means of his falsehoods—these again point out useful lessons, afford good examples, and place the vices of the world forcibly in their proper light.

Jean is exquisitely witty. In few of his works has Paul de Kock displayed so much humour as in this. All the peculiarities of the French, youthful and aged, are brought to view. The first chapter is delicious; M. Durand, a herbalist, is called up in the middle of the night to fetch the doctor and the nurse for his wife, who is about to give birth to a child. M. Durand is not the bravest man in existence; and as he traverses one of the streets of Paris, he sees a drunken wretch reeling about in that glorious state which defies all control. The attenuated imagination of M. Durand instantly converts the drunkard into a thief, so that the poor herbalist takes to his heels, and hurries towards the street where the nurse lives. He forgets the number of the house, and, in his affright, knocks at the doors of several, crying out "*La garde ! la garde !*" (The nurse! the nurse!) which also means "The guard! the guard!" He arrives home without

any accident, and gives his wife, and a neighbour who has kindly dropped in, a fine description of his walk, or rather run. Meantime the labour-pains increase: a loud knocking at the front door seems to promise the assistance of the nurse or the doctor; the door opens, and as Madame Durand gives birth to a son, who should enter the room but a corporal and four soldiers, crying in a terrible voice, "Where are the robbers?"

The fact was, that the neighbourhood, alarmed by the cries of Durand in the street, and hearing him hallooing after "*la garde!*" fancied he was summoning military assistance instead of a nurse; and up to the period when the history takes leave of her, the servant continually declared that Monsieur Durand had expressly called in a regiment of soldiers to see his wife brought to bed.

There are some admirable characters in *Jean*. Belle-queue the retired barber, Mistigris the dancing-master, and father Chopard, are exquisite. There is also Madame Ledoux, the widow of three husbands, and the mother of fourteen children. In conversation she universally alludes to the sheriff's officer, the stationer, or the cabinet-maker, her departed lords; and she is continually making comparisons between other people's children and her thirteenth, or ninth,

or seventh child, she forgets which ; but she declares in Madame Durand's case that she has never known so military an *anaccouchement*. She had heard of military weddings, but never of military births.

John, the hero of this novel, is at first a good-for-nothing fellow, who does nought but drink, smoke, play billiards, and spend money. He is moreover fond of all childish tricks, and swears most horribly. But love, all-powerful love, before whose darts fall vanquished kings, princes, and nobles—love,

Who rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above ;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

Love makes him reflect, causes him to look into himself, shows him to himself in all his deformity of manners and habits, and obliges him to abandon his low-life pursuits : in fine, he becomes an altered man. The conclusion is easily divined. How should the novel end save in a marriage ? The lady, Caroline Dorville, the object of Jean's attachment, becomes sensible of the youth's merits since his change of behaviour ; she also entertains a reciprocal attachment, and, despite of the mean devices of their enemies, they are united in matrimonial bonds.

"Where is the moral," the English reader may ask, "in this novel?" The moral is, that however bad our propensities may be, however degraded are our associates, however vicious our pursuits, repentance is seldom too late, and a joyous dawn may rise upon the clouds of an obscure night. Paul de Kock knows well how to keep up the interest of his tales till the last. In those where there are mysteries, few would guess the *dénouement*; and in those where there are not, the mind is never wearied of dwelling upon the work, although no elucidation of anything as yet unaccounted for be anticipated at the end. We know but very few novels where there is no mystery, and only one where there is no heroine; this is "Caleb Williams," for Miss Melville cannot be called the heroine of the tale: her history is merely an episode. We know many *books* written for amusement and not for instruction, where there is no heroine, but only that one *novel*.

Even to the adventures of childhood M. de Kock gives an essential interest. The early years of Jean are the most amusing parts of the book. But let us say one word upon *M. Dupont*.

Monsieur Dupont is a grocer, and he falls in love, very naturally, with a beautiful girl, whose nomenclature is far from sentimental. Miss Moutonnet

—atrocious appellation!—has, however, her own *cher ami*, Adolphe. Adolphe is the unsuccessful suitor—Dupont becomes the bridegroom. And here there are certain details of the marriage ceremony which decency obliges us to pass over : suffice it to say that M. Dupont insists upon having thistles tied to the horses' tails, and nosegays placed between their ears. The occasional remarks of an old clerk, Bidois, are particularly *piquant*. In this character Paul de Kock combines much of humour, honesty, and curiosity : Bidois has all the wit of Dubourg and Chaudoreille, without their vices ; and his patience on many occasions is worthy of an imitator of the ancient Job. Distress and sorrow on the part of Eugenie, late Eugenie Moutonnet, now Dupont, are the consequences of the marriage ; and she dreams of nothing but Adolphe, whom poverty had rendered unsuccessful in his suit. She moreover bars her door against Dupont, and the disconsolate husband in vain wishes for an heir to his wealth. Circumstances oblige Dupont to undertake a journey to a distant town : in the meantime Eugenie has proofs of Adolphe's infidelity ; she sees him with a mistress at the theatre, and repents of her conduct towards her lawful husband. She therefore writes to Dupont, and tells him of her change of disposition

in his favour. The enraptured Dupont hastens to return to his wife: his speed originates many pleasant remarks and many laughable occurrences on the road; and the publicity he gives to the object of his journey affords much amusement to the innkeepers and servants whom he encounters at the various hotels. But, alas! Dupont never reaches his home! By means of a power which authors—and none besides—have at their controul, and which they can use at discretion to disembarass themselves of troublesome characters in their works, even as the immortal Shakspeare was fain to do with Mercutio;—by means of death—for an author's agency in a dilemma is no other—Paul de Kock gets rid of Dupont, and concludes the tale with the happy reconciliation of Eugenie and Adolphe (who has become a rich man through the decease of an uncle) and their speedy union. From this narrative parents may learn how dangerous it is to thwart the inclinations of their children; and old men will see the folly of making young girls miserable by entangling them in a matrimonial web, which the unfortunate victims of hoary lust or paternal avarice regard as the fly does the dwelling of the spider, while the old husband is as obnoxious to them as the spider himself.

There is another work of M. de Kock's, which must not be here passed over in silence, especially as it will presently furnish us with an amusing extract. The novel to which we allude is *L'Amant—Le Mari—et La Femme*. Deligny, a young gentleman, who dissipates a considerable fortune, becomes attached to a beautiful lady named Augustine : but there hangs around this fair personage such a degree of mystery, that a thousand suspicions and fears haunt the mind of her lover. She encourages his visits, and yet she never hearkens to the outpourings of his passionate eloquence in favour of his own suit. Her sole aim in courting his acquaintance appears to be an ardent love of scandal, and a desire to be made aware of all particulars relative to the mode of life adopted by a M. Jenneville, one of Deligny's friends. Deligny satisfies her curiosity, and informs her of Jenneville's amour with a Madame Herminie. Augustine then makes him a species of spy upon the actions of Jenneville ; and Deligny reports to this singular being all he can gather concerning him. In the course of time, an adventurer, of the name of Blagnard, makes Jenneville and Deligny both his dupes, and both are ruined. Deligny retires to a miserable lodging with the remnants of his scattered fortunes ; and Jenneville is immured in a debtor's

prison. Augustine sells all her estate to release Jenneville; because—he is her husband! But Death is again called into the aid of the lovers by M. Paul de Kock: Jenneville is killed by Blagnard in a duel, and Deligny espouses Augustine.

The by-play of this novel is exceedingly entertaining; and the characters of the sprightly Dubois and the penurious Jollivet are maintained with great spirit. Like all the works of this author, the incidents are crowded rapidly one upon another; but the whole is written in a style so easy and so fluent, that the most shallow observer can almost trace the celerity, with which Paul de Kock writes, in every line. The stage of his novels is ever a busy one: the actors and actresses come and go one after another, and then return again, as quickly as invention can make them; and never is the interest of the piece, in which they are engaged, suffered to flag.

We must not forget to mention that Paul de Kock has also contributed to the stage; but his dramas resemble his novels, without experiencing a millionth part of their success. We believe that his efforts have been chiefly confined to the Funambules, the Gaité, and other minor theatres; and that he has seldom attempted anything of a range high

enough to tempt the managers or proprietors of the Porte Saint Martin.

We hope that this elaborate sketch will not be without producing some beneficial effects upon the minds of our fellow-countrymen ; but a deeply rooted prejudice against the inimitable works of this author is generally prevalent in England ; and, although some languid and ineffectual attempts have from time to time been made to destroy this singular antipathy, still no translation of any of his novels has done otherwise than issue still-born from the press. One or two periodicals have introduced occasional episodes from his most popular publications, during the last two or three years ; but even they failed to excite any sensation or awaken any extraordinary degree of interest in the minds of their readers. In many instances these translations have been executed in a spirited and talented manner, and conveyed an accurate idea of the great original : prejudice is, therefore, the principal cause of the unpopularity of Paul de Kock's works in the sphere of English literature ; but a carefully expunged version of his best writings would be an auspicious and lucrative attempt on the part of an English author.

The novels of Paul de Kock are *romans de mœurs* ; and as such, they present a most correct and striking

picture of Parisian life, society, and manners in all their various shades and colourings. His scenes for the most part exhibit the peculiarities of the middling classes. His wit and humour are irresistible, when he chooses to be gay; and when he appeals to the feelings, the tears of the reader must flow in sympathy with the hero or heroine whose misfortunes he is occupied in perusing. Thus, in *L'Amant—le Mari—et la Femme*, *Gustave, André, M. Dupont*, &c., is such an over-flowing abundance of humour and drollery that peels of laughter greet every fresh page. The most mirthful scenes in "Peregrine Pickle," "Roderick Random," or "Joseph Andrews," are—to use the words of our friend Sancho Panza—"but cakes and gingerbread" to the numberless ludicrous details and adventures to be met with in the works of Paul de Kock; in fact, no English author ever possessed such wonderful powers of exciting the risible muscles of his readers as he. As a specimen of his abilities in this especial capacity, we shall select the following episode from the third volume of *L'Amant—le Mari—et la Femme*.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

The moment the letter was put into my hand, I recognised the writing of my father, and for some minutes was unable to break open the epistle and peruse its contents. I felt certain that my father was again disappointed at the frequent procrastination of my visit to him, and a sentiment of remorse immediately superseded the feeling of alarm that had first possessed me. At length I broke the seal and read the following words :—

“ My dear Son,

“ It is in vain that I have been expecting you for so long a time; and since you cannot come and stay with me, I have made up my mind to proceed to Paris and visit you. I do not complain of your absence—for I am well aware that your vast speculations and great commercial transactions necessarily detain you in Paris. At first it was my intention to have surprised you with my visit; but I know so little of the gay metropolis, that I was afraid of losing myself in its mazes. I shall therefore thank you to be looking out for me in the court-yard of the *Messageries Royales* to-morrow afternoon at five o'clock.

“ Your affectionate father,

“ DELIGNY.”

The letter fell from my hands, and I sank into a chair in stupid astonishment. The poor old man! he fancied his son was rich and prosperous, and living in a magnificent abode—he hoped to see a realization of all I had deceptively told him in my letters—but how terribly was he doomed to be disappointed! Scarcely a quarter of the competent fortune he had placed at my disposal the day I became of age, now remained to me; and my poor lodgings were not calculated to favour a longer cheat.

It was then twelve o'clock—I had already five hours before me, and at Paris in that space of time one can accomplish a thousand metamorphoses. I therefore jumped into a cabriolet, and desired the driver to take me to the address of my friend Dubois. The last time I saw him he resided in the Rue des Lombards, and I only prayed to God that he might be there still, for in him all my hopes now reposed. Fortunately my anticipations were not unfounded, and on my arrival at an old house which appeared to have been built in the reign of Philip Augustus, but at which I fancied my friend lodged, a portress, as ancient as the dwelling itself, informed me that M. Dubois was at home, on the second storey, at the back.

To that eminence I rapidly ascended, and knocked violently at the door of a suite of apartments thus indicated by the guardian of the house. At first I despaired of arousing my friend, and bringing him to the door; but at length a voice, which I immediately knew to be that of Dubois, cried from the inside, "Wait one moment, in God's name! What the devil makes you in such a hurry? Who is it?"

"It is I—Paul Deligny—open the door."

"Ah! 'tis you, my dear friend."

And with these words Dubois opened the door, and appeared before me in his night-shirt.

"What," cried I, "you are not yet dressed?"

"No, Deligny, not yet."

"In bed at twelve o'clock!"

"Oh! 'tis all the same to me."

"I suppose you were up all night at a ball?"

"Quite the contrary, I have passed the night in bed."

And with this assurance, Dubois again sought his warm couch, and carefully covered himself up with the clothes.

"What, Dubois!" cried I, "do you mean to lie in bed all day?"

"Most decidedly, my dear friend."

"Are you unwell, then?"

"Oh, no, on the contrary, I never was in better health."

"And yet you waste the most beautiful portion of the day in that fashion?"

"I am obliged to do so, my dear friend. But have you shut the door?"

"Yes, the door is shut and locked. And now, Dubois, in the name of every thing sacred, get up, and lend me your aid in a case of emergency, which—"

"Deligny," interrupted Dubois, "nothing would please me better than to get up from this cursed bed. Do you think I stay here to amuse myself? I, who have a thousand visits to pay this morning, and a dozen *rendez-vous*: one in particular, with a little milliner—Oh, what a fool I was to speak of it!"

"Come, come, Dubois; truce to pleasantry, and get up."

"And pray, how the devil will you have me dress myself? I have got no breeches?"

"No pantaloons!" exclaimed I in unfeigned surprise.

"No trousers of any kind," returned Dubois.

"Not a single pair?"

"Alas! not one."

"If you have no summer-trousers, at least, put on a winter-pair."

"In the first place, my dear fellow, I am not accustomed to keep my winter gear in the hot season; I am afraid they will be eaten up by the moths. But now, in spite of the heat, if I had only a pair of trousers—were they made of leather—I would wear them."

"But you did not return home last evening without breeches?" said I.

"No, decidedly not. I had on yesterday a pair of lilac trousers with dark stripes. And I was also the sole proprietor of three more pairs which were in that old cupboard you see in the corner of the room."

"There has been a burglary here then, in the course of the night?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed Dubois, "the farce is the most laughable that ever was enacted!"

"It seems to amuse you, Dubois, to be without breeches."

"The fact is, my dear friend, that about eleven o'clock last evening I received the visit of a magnificent lady—milliner, by profession—which said sensitive personage condescended to vegetate a short period in my hermitage. But she is jealous in the

extreme; and I had the folly to speak to her about my engagements of this morning, and amongst others, of my *rendez-vous* with the little milliner; to be brief, my sensitive companion arose early this morning, before I was awake, and carried of all my trousers."

"Yes, but, my dear Dubois," interrupted I, smiling at the same time at the ludicrousness of the adventure, "wherefore could you not call the portress and send her to purchase a pair of trousers?"

"O yes; purchase a pair; a thing very easily said, particularly when one has just twelve sous in the world."

"What! you are without money, Dubois—and you did not send to ask me for some?"

"My dear Deligny, you have not too much for yourself; and to-morrow I shall bring to a termination three brilliant affairs, which—"

"All that is very probable."

"And I am certain," continued Dubois, "that my sensitive lady will return this evening with my breeches."

"That may be; but in the meantime I require your assistance. My father arrives at five o'clock, and I am desirous of concealing from him my real

position. He is wedded to his country habits, and will not stay many days in Paris : but if, during those few days, it were possible to make him think me rich, and prosperous, the poor old man would return to Chartres satisfied and happy, and would leave me to live quietly in Paris. Such is my emergency, Dubois ; cannot you aid me with your advice,—your assistance ? At the same time I cannot take my father to an hotel."

"My dear friend," exclaimed Dubois, "nothing is more easily managed than this little affair of your's. In the first place, I can lend you my lodging."

"Very much obliged, Dubois ; but my own is a palace compared to this vile hole !"

"*Diable !* I know several painters who have immense workshops ; your father would be at his ease in one of them ; but there is no furniture there : I might also introduce him to some of my mistresses ; but they have only one bed each ; and—"

"Are you mad, Dubois ? Recollect that my father must be made to believe that he is in my house—living with his son."

"Ah, indeed !" exclaimed Dubois : then after a moment's thought, he added, "wait an instant ; we shall still succeed. I recollect a splendid suite of

apartments in the Allée des Veuves, which we may have, if they be not already let. The lady of the house is a friend of mine."

With these words Dubois jumped out of bed, crying, "Deligny, lend me your pantaloons."

"My pantaloons!—and wherefore?"

"What for? Why—to go out with, to be sure! If it were in winter I might venture to walk abroad in a cloak—but in summer-time, impossible! besides—I have no cloak: but do not let us waste time in idle discussion."

Dubois appeared to be so confident of succeeding in his enterprize, that I did not hesitate any longer, but immediately took off my pantaloons and ceded them to my friend, at the same time giving him money to pay for a cabriolet, and lending him my watch, that he might not forget the time. He solemnly declared that he would return in three quarters of an hour, and disappeared, crying, as he descended the staircase, "Mind you do not go away until I come back!" *Parbleu!* he knew very well that it was not likely!

I must have cut a most ridiculous figure in my full costume, breeches excepted!—and I walked about the room, smiling at the adventure. But, in the meantime, Dubois remained a long while absent,

and certain uneasy reflections came across my mind : for I thought of the embarrassments I should be involved in if he did not return before five o'clock. I could not even ascertain the hour at a neighbour's apartments, for the cold wind perpetually reminded me of my awkward position.

In this predicament I bethought myself that Dubois' cupboards might contain a book with which I should be able to wile away the time until his return. I accordingly opened those sacred recesses, and discovered three volumes of great antiquity and covered with dust. The first was "A Treatise on the Deceitfulness of Riches," by Seneca ;—the second, "On the Utility of Flagellation," by Mirabeau the younger ;—and the third was entitled, "Man in his Primitive Condition." It struck me that all those works were allusive to my peculiar condition, and I already began to curse the tardiness of my friend. But at the moment when I was about to consign his books to the lurking-hole whence I had dragged them, a bundle in one corner of the cupboard met my eyes. I drew it forth—unrolled it—and to my joy discovered the ample folds of an extensive dressing-gown.

But on a more minute examination of the treasure, I was not surprised that Dubois had condemned

it to perpetual imprisonment in his cupboard. The more intimate my acquaintance with the old garment became, the more hideous was it to my eyes. Seedy and threadbare, discoloured and faded, the dressing-gown was not worth a franc even to an itinerant Jew clothes-man; and the collar was so low, it appeared to have been cut down like a seventy-four gun ship razé into a frigate.

It was, however, highly important for me to ascertain the hour; and without a moment's delay I took off my coat, endorsed the old dressing-gown, and saw with pleasure that it descended to my heels. The venerable garment did not open behind—this was fortunate; there was, however, one difficulty—and that was, how to close it hermetically in front. The buttons had long ago yielded to use and wear—I therefore came to the sagacious resolution of fastening it with pins. I looked at myself in the glass, and fancied that I resembled one of those old Jews who sell opera-glasses and amber mouth-pieces for pipes at the corners of the streets. But that was a trifle compared to the advantage of being enabled to issue from Dubois' apartment. I was too much delighted at the prospect of once more breathing the fresh air of heaven; and having hastily adjusted my dress so as to coalesce with the

rules of *decorum*, through the *medium* of a few pins which I found on Dubois' table, I sallied forth and descended into the street, where I saw by a neighbouring clock that it was on the point of striking five.

I immediately summoned a cabriolet from the nearest coach-stand, determined in my own mind to hasten and meet my father in the diligence-yard, and conduct him to my lodgings in the Rue Charlot, where I would explain to him my follies, my misfortunes, and my poverty. Despite of my pins, it appeared to me that every one who passed guessed that I had no trousers on; and during the drive from the Rue des Lombard to the Messageries, I could not divest myself of the most disagreeable sensations relative to the approaching interview and explanation I was about to have with my father.

At length we arrived at the diligence-yard, and I sent the driver of the cabriolet to ascertain if the coach from Chartres had yet arrived. While my deputy was busy in executing this commission, I kept myself closely shut up in the cabriolet, and was particularly cautious not to open the apron. Presently the messenger returned, and informed me that the coach had not yet arrived, and it would drive into a private court to which the public vehi-

cles of Paris could not penetrate. This was the coronation of my miseries. I was obliged to quit my cabriolet and hasten to wait for my father!

My situation did not, however, render me so desperate as to deprive me of that presence of mind which was necessary, in such a predicament, to enable me to descend with precaution from the seat of the cabriolet.

"You appear to suffer in the legs, *Monsieur*," observed the driver with an accent of pity.

"Yes—I am troubled with the gout," said I. "Wait for me here."

I hurried into the court-yard where the diligence of Chartres was expected, and as it had not yet arrived, I returned to the most obscure corner, and seated myself on a bench, drawing my hat as far over my face as I possibly could. Five minutes had not elapsed, while I was in this miserable position, when the coach drove up rapidly into the yard. I was about to quit my retired nook and hasten to receive my father, when a violent shout of laughter fell upon my ears, and attracted my attention. I turned slowly round—the first thing that met my view was a pair of pantaloons which I recognised but too well—and then, as I raised my eyes, the whole form of Dubois was revealed to my angry

glances. He was convulsed with laughter, and the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Is that you, wretch?" said I.

"Ha! ha! ha! I recognised you from the other end of the yard. The old dressing-gown that belongs to my uncle!—it fits you admirably."

"You laugh now, Dubois; but I shall make you repent on a future occasion."

"O Paul! let me laugh a little! If you could only see yourself! no money could procure so strange a sight for an *amateur*—with all those pins!"

"I must now hasten to receive my father, but in the course of the day you shall hear from me, Dubois, in a manner—"

"Nonsense! my dear fellow," exclaimed my volatile friend, "every thing goes on well. A splendid apartment—for nothing—in the Allée des Veuves; a landlady devoted to our cause; and—but, by the bye, I found my wretch of a milliner trying my breeches on a tall whiskered life-guardsmen."

"Here is my father—"

"Let us hasten to receive him; then you must invent some pretext—a *rendez-vous*, for instance,—and retire to the *Rue Charlot* to dress yourself. In the meantime I will amuse him."

"Yes, Dubois; but may I depend upon you this time?"

"Certainly; and do not keep your legs so close together,—people will think they are tied."

I followed Dubois to the diligence in which my father was just arrived; the assurance of my friend restored me to gaiety and good-humour; and I walked more lightly than the actual state of my toilet ought to have permitted. My father received me with open arms; I embraced him long and fervently; and then Dubois threw himself upon his neck, and hugged him like a young bear. My father with difficulty shook off the affectionate individual, whose name and motives he appeared to demand of me in a significant glance. I accordingly hastened to assure him that "my friend Dubois—broker by profession—was one of my oldest acquaintances, and that he was very desirous of becoming acquainted with him."

"To know the father of my friend," exclaimed Dubois, "Oh! what raptures does not the prospect hold out!"

"You are too kind, *Monsieur*," cried my father: "I said to myself, said I, 'Since my son will not come to see me, I must needs call upon him.'"

"Admirably argued!" ejaculated Dubois.

"Ah! my dear Paul, how happy I am to see you once more," continued my poor father.

"Why do you not embrace your respectable parent with fervour and filial enthusiasm?" cried Dubois, pushing me towards my father with all his might.

The old gentleman gave a loud scream, and exclaimed, "Ah! what the devil is that which pricked me?"

I immediately blushed deeply: it was one of my pins that had pierced the calf of my father's leg. Dubois screwed his lips together to suppress a smile; and my father, now attentively examining me for the first time, cried out in astonishment, "Hallo! my dear boy—it appears to me that you are somewhat singularly clad."

I hesitated—endeavoured to stammer forth some explanation, when Dubois hastily relieved me from my embarrassment.

"It is his summer costume, my dear Sir," said he. "At the first glance you would think that long coat would be exceedingly hot, but I assure you that beneath its folds your son is admirably at his ease."

"But wherefore those pins instead of buttons?"

"Oh, always pins, my dear Sir."

"Indeed!"

"To be sure!—we have always worn pins in Paris."

"Yes—pins to the shirt, but not to the coat."

"On the contrary, it is now the universally prevailing fashion in the French metropolis."

"And yet I always thought that only ladies wore pins, and that men had buttons," persisted my father.

"It was so before the revolution," cried Dubois; "but the march of intelligence and civilization has changed almost every institution, and amongst others—"

I trod on Dubois' toes to make him hold his tongue, and hastened to change the conversation.

"We can converse anon on fashions and toilet," cried I; "in the meantime my father is fatigued, and stands in need of repose till dinner-time."

"You are right, my dear boy. Let us proceed to your house forthwith."

"Yes, my dear Sir, we will conduct you thither immediately," exclaimed Dubois, taking my father's arm; "that is to say, I will act as your *chaperon*. I have a hackney-coach waiting for us in the adjoining yard, and in two minutes—"

"What! do you not accompany us, my dear Paul?" demanded M. Deligny, senior.

"My dear father, I ask a thousand pardons; but an affair of vital importance—"

"Yes, Sir," cried Dubois, "an affair, as your son observes, of vital importance; being nothing less than a speculation involving a sum of a million of francs. Oh! I assure you, your son is a man of business. There are not two individuals at the Exchange whose fortunes are more assured than his."

"Indeed, my dear Paul—"

"I shall not be absent more than an hour," said I. "In the meantime, Dubois, you will not leave my father?"

"I leave your father!" cried my facetious friend; "I would sooner receive a thousand blows on the soles of my feet with a rattan, than leave him for a moment. Have you got your carpet bag, my dear Sir?"

"Yes. I am ready to follow you."

"In that case, come along with me; and I will conduct you to your son's abode, an hotel that belongs to him, my dear Sir—his own property."

It was with unfeigned delight that I saw Dubois depart, accompanied by my poor credulous old father; and immediately regaining the cabriolet that was waiting for me, I hastened to the Rue Charlot

to disencumber myself of my present equipment, and assume one more to my taste, and more consonant with the fashions of the day.

* * * * *

No sooner did the cabriolet stop at the door of the house in the Allée des Veuves, than Dubois came running out, rubbing his hands, and laughing with all his might.

"Well, my dear Paul," said he, "how do you like the appearance of the house outside?"

"Admirable," said I; "and if the interior only fulfil the promises held out by the exterior—"

"Oh! it is a thousand times better! you will be enchanted, my dear friend."

"Thank God!—and my father?"

"He is in Elysium," answered Dubois. "I told him the house was your's."

"It was scarcely worth while," said I.

"But since the innocent falsehood pleases the poor old man, where is the harm?"

"Is he in his bed-room at this moment?"

"No—he wanders about the various apartments admiring the furniture, and looking at himself in the glasses."

"In that case I had better become acquainted with my new lodgings, as well as he."

"One moment, my dear fellow," exclaimed Dubois: "you must first suffer me to introduce you to your landlady: she is a personage that is apt to be ceremonious in these little matters, and any neglect might be fatal. But here we are."

And with these words Dubois introduced me into a room on the ground-floor, where we found a fat old lady of about five-and-forty, seated at a table, and covering little pots of jam with paper steeped in brandy.

"Madame Ledoux," said Dubois, "I beg to introduce my friend M. Paul Deligny, who was exceedingly anxious to see you, and to have an opportunity of thanking you for your kindness in his present dilemma."

"My dear M. Dubois," exclaimed Madame Ledoux, "I am delighted to be able to oblige any of your acquaintances. I also know how to pardon the errors of young men, for whom I always make allowances."

"You are very kind, Madam," said I: "my friend Dubois has no doubt informed you that my reasons for deceiving my poor father are—"

"My dear Sir, truce to apologies, and make yourself as comfortable as you can so long as you remain in my house. Go, and rejoin your father, who—by

the bye—appears to be a very respectable old gentleman. And you, M. Dubois—I should be glad to have five minutes' conversation with you on the prices of the West Indian markets."

I left Dubois *tête-à-tête* with Madame Ledoux, and hastily ascended the stairs that led to my new apartments. I arrived in a beautiful ante-room, where I found a servant in livery whose politeness was extreme: indeed his manners bore witness to the fact that Madame Ledoux had neglected nothing that might maintain the rank and appearance I wished to assume. Having traversed several handsome apartments, I at length found my father seated on a sofa in a magnificent drawing-room. No sooner did the excellent old man espy me than he ran towards me with open arms, crying, "Ah! my dear Paul—I felicitate you on the splendour of your abode."

"My dear father," said I, "at Paris it is very easy to have everything one requires."

"Yes—but to have such a beautiful *suite* of apartments, to possess servants, furniture, every luxury, in fine—you must be economical and prudent."

"The mere possession of such valuables, my dear father," I observed, with an ill-suppressed sigh, "is not always a proof of affluence."

"Excellent! you will make yourself out to be poor next: but your friend has betrayed you; and to convince you that I know more than you have an idea of, shall I tell you that this house is your own?"

"Mine!" I exclaimed: "not the whole of it!"

"Well—never mind, Paul; you are rich—you have trebled your capital—"

"My dear father!"

"Oh! I am acquainted with all your secrets, you see: your friend, M. Dubois, has told me everything."

"Lapierre!" cried I, in a loud voice; for the conversation was turning upon topics far from amusing, and I was anxious to escape a farther *tête-à-tête* with my credulous parent.

Lapierre—such was the name of Madame Ledoux's servant—immediately obeyed my summons, and Dubois entered the room at the same time.

"Is dinner nearly ready?" said I, in a timid tone of voice.

"Dinner!" exclaimed Dubois; "certainly it is! But you were in such a hurry to seek your father's society that you had not time to give your butler orders."

"What, Paul! do you keep a butler also!" exclaimed my father in astonishment.

"Not only a butler," answered Dubois, "but also one of the best cooks in France, to whom he gives a hundred and twenty pounds sterling a year."

"A hundred and twenty pounds to a cook!" cried my father. "One must enter deeply into commercial speculations, and reap amazing profits, to be able to afford such wages."

"Dubois is joking," said I, blushing up to the eyes.

"An instant—let us understand each other," interrupted Dubois. "Your son gives his cook a hundred and twenty pounds a year; but the cook furnishes everything."

"Oh! then it is not so dear after all," cried my still credulous parent.

We proceeded to the dining-room, and found a most succulent repast awaiting our attack. Dubois ate and drank like an ogre; and my father did not fail to do honour to the banquet, during which I was frequently obliged to tread on Dubois' toes, when he began talking of my vassals, my estates, my horses, &c. &c.

"Thank God!" cried my excellent father; "I am delighted to see you well off in the world, my

dear Paul; and, by the bye—while I think of it, let me tell you, that you are much better dressed *now* than you were this morning.”

“Do you think so?” said I, affecting indifference.

“To speak plainly, Paul, your long dressing-gown, cropt of its collar, and garnished with pins, did not at all please me.”

“Well, for my part, Father Deligny,” exclaimed Dubois, becoming familiar as the wine gradually worked upon his brain, “I do not agree with you; the dressing-gown has its good qualities, and particularly as it regarded the rest of Deligny’s toilet. You cannot fancy how cool he must have felt himself in it.”

“I did not think so just now,” observed my father. “However, my dear boys, you know I cannot stay long in Paris—so you must endeavour to amuse me as much as you possibly can. By the bye, I should like to go to the theatre, amongst other things.”

“I will accompany you, my dear father,” said I.

“Do not be afraid, papa Deligny,” cried Dubois: “I only wish we could shew you all Paris in one day.”

“You are very kind,” said my father: “but it seems to me that this quarter of the city is not at all central.”

"Not central!" ejaculated Dubois. "Why, you are in the neighbourhood of everything most interesting and most attractive! The triumphal arch—the skittle ground—the mad-houses—the road to the Bois de Boulogne! It is impossible to be in a better quarter!"

"But the Palais Royal—"

"Well, the Palais Royal is close by—just a few minutes' walk, if you run rather quick."*

"Can we go to the theatre this evening?" demanded my father.

"Certainly," cried Dubois. "But which do you prefer? the romantic—the classical, or the comic?"

"What does that mean, Paul?" asked my father.

"Three different kinds of drama," I began, "which—"

"Ah! papa Deligny," interrupted Dubois, "do you not read the newspapers in your little town?"

"Certainly—the *Farmer's Journal*," was the answer: "but it never speaks of those matters."

"Well, then, we must take you to the Opera," said Dubois. "Have you a good Opera-glass? and

* The admirable humour of this scene can only be fully appreciated by those who are familiar with Paris and its localities. The fact is, that the Allée des Veuves is an out-of-the-way place; and the Palais Royal is at least two miles distant from it.

do you like to see the dancing-girls make *pirouettes* without putting a leg to the ground?"

"Nonsense, Dubois," cried I. "A truce to folly; and let us endeavour to procure a vehicle."

"*Parbleu!* I will order your own forthwith!"

"Your's, Paul!" exclaimed my father.

"No—no: Dubois is only joking, as usual," cried I, red with confusion.

"When I say *his* carriage," observed Dubois, "I merely allude to the one he usually patronizes, which comes to the same thing in the end."

Having achieved this explanation, Dubois summoned Lapierre, and whispered an order in his ear to fetch us a hackney-coach. The domestic departed to execute the order; but twenty minutes elapsed before he returned; and although Dubois did everything he could to prevent the conversation from languishing, and to amuse my father, still the old gentleman enquired every moment "whether the carriage I usually patronised were not near the house!" At length Lapierre announced the arrival of the vehicle: we descended the stairs, and sought the court-yard where the hackney-coach awaited us. Madame Ledoux was standing at the door of her own suite of apartments; and, as we passed, she made us a thousand polite curtseys and reverences.

My father enquired who she was; and Dubois assured him that she was my house-keeper. It was with the greatest difficulty in the world that I prevented the old gentleman from hastening to pay her a compliment on the cleanliness of the premises.

We happened to have fallen in with the dirtiest vehicle and the most miserable pair of horses in all Paris; and my father could not help remarking "that the carriage I usually patronized went at an amazingly slow pace." Dubois assured him that prudence alone prevented the coachman from suffering his horses to gallop like the wind, as immense crowds of people were pursuing the same road. Had my father thought of looking out of the window, dark as it was, he might have speedily discovered the contrary; for we were in the Champs Elysées, and there was not a soul to be seen.

At the expiration of three quarters of an hour, we arrived at the Opera, and secured places in the pit. My father was attention personified during the progress of the opera; but Dubois annoyed every one in our immediate vicinity with his loud remarks. At length he espied some pretty faces, which he pretended to recognise, in the gallery, and

left me alone to amuse my father for the rest of the evening.

When the opera was concluded, my father declared that he was fatigued, and requested to be re-conducted to "my house" in the Allée des Veuves. Thither we immediately bent our way, with the aid of a hackney-coach and a pair of horses somewhat more decent than those which had taken us to the theatre.

The following morning found my father still more anxious than he was on the previous day to see all "the lions" of Paris; and during breakfast he wearied me with an incessant cry of "You will take me to see this;" and "You will not forget to show me that, Paul;" &c., &c. At length, to my great relief, Dubois arrived. The old gentleman immediately asked him wherefore he had quitted the opera so early on the preceding evening; to which Dubois replied, "that he had recognised a few of his cousins in another part of the house, and that he made it a point never to neglect his family." My father approved of Dubois' conduct, and expressed his desire to commence the grand tour of Paris which he had projected. We accordingly prepared to sally forth, when Madame Ledoux sent

to Dubois to request him to call at her apartments, and inform her of the average prices of the various species of West-Indian merchandize. Dubois was obliged to obey the summons, and left my father and myself to walk alone.

The day passed away—for my part, I thought it would never end; but my father amused himself to his heart's content with the Tuileries, the Louvre, the Garden of Plants, the Pantheon, the Luxembourg, the Mint, Notre-Dame, &c., &c., and at six o'clock in the evening we hastened to the Palais Royal to partake of a copious repast that it was my intention to order. I had informed Dubois at which *restaurant* we intended to dine, and I had still a feeble ray of hope left that he would join us. Nor was I disappointed. Scarcely was the soup placed upon the table, when Dubois entered the *Café*.

"How fares it now, Papa Deligny?" cried he. "You are fresh as a rose."

"Why did you not join us before, Dubois?" said I, perceiving that my father was rather annoyed by his familiarity.

"Ah! why, indeed!" exclaimed Dubois, "In the first place, Madame Ledoux—your house-keeper, you know—is terribly tedious when once she gets you to talk on mercantile matters. Our

conversation lasted at least an hour, and then I recollected that I had an appointment of great consequence—" (Dubois leant towards me, and whispered,) "at the office of a Commissary of Police—touching a very important matter (relative to my breeches, you know,) the neglect of which would have caused no inconsiderable degree of embarrassment. (I have not the slightest objection to give my heart to the fair sex, but I will not surrender my breeches.)"

I profited by this explanation to observe that I also had an appointment to keep in the course of the evening; but that as my father was with me, I should be compelled to break it.

"Do not inconvenience yourself, my dear Paul, on my account," said my father. "Go to your *rendez-vous*; M. Dubois will doubtless keep me company."

"Certainly," exclaimed Dubois. "Do not be afraid, Papa Deligny, that I will not amuse you. We will have our fun, I promise you."

"And I will join you in the Passage des Panoramas at half-past nine," said I, glad to escape for a short time from my father and Dubois.

No sooner had I left these two gentlemen alone together, than Dubois called for a variety of wines

and liqueurs, and compelled my father to taste and give his opinion on the excellence of every species. Unfortunately Dubois had received some money in the morning, and he did not care how soon he expended it. But for every glass of liqueur he ordered, my father called for another; and a rivalry appeared to spring up between them as to who should pay for the greater number of glasses. God only knows how all this might have finished: but luckily the frequency of their potations heated those gentlemen to such an excess, that they were obliged to seek the refreshment of the open air.

"Let us take a little walk," said my father.

"Yes—let us stroll up the Boulevards and ogle the girls," cried Dubois.

To the Boulevards they accordingly repaired, and Dubois began talking to every female whom he met.

"You seem to know a great many people," said my father.

"I! respectable old man," returned Dubois—"I am as well acquainted with the fair sex as artists are with the Belvidere Apollo."

A few of the young ladies were however offended with the familiarity of Dubois; and when two or

three men began to interfere, Dubois endeavoured to make my father quicken his pace.

"What makes all those people cry out after us in this manner?" demanded my father.

"Because they are rascals whom I have a great mind to thrash," replied Dubois; "but I shall not touch them this evening because you are with me."

It was now very late; and my father, who was exceedingly tired, expressed his desire to return home and seek repose.

"You cannot think of going to bed yet!" exclaimed Dubois. "It is not ten o'clock yet; and in Paris no honest man thinks of going to bed before twelve."

"But, if I be tired?" remonstrated my father.

"No, respectable old man!" cried Dubois; "you are not fatigued—I cannot allow you to sleep. We will take a hackney-coach, and I will conduct you to the most agreeable place in the world—not far from your son's house—where you may amuse yourself to your most perfect satisfaction."

Dubois accordingly summoned a hackney-coach from a neighbouring stand; and having shoved my father inside, he desired the coachman to drive them to the *Salon de Flore*. He then entered the vehicle also, and it drove away at a rapid rate.

"What is the *Salon de Flore*?" enquired my father.

"A *bal-champêtre*," was the reply.

"But what can I do at a ball? I do not dance at my age?"

"How old are you, respectable father of my friend?" demanded Dubois.

"Fifty-eight."

"That is the finest age for dancing," cried Dubois; "because your legs perform the various steps with a certain stiffness perfectly *unique*."

They arrived at the *Salon de Flore*, and Dubois paraded my father about the room, making him offer a pinch of snuff to every girl who had any claim to personal attractions. The old gentleman thought it was a custom peculiar to Paris, and walked round the room with his box open in his hand. Presently Dubois proposed a bowl of punch to refresh themselves, an offer that was immediately accepted by my father, who scarcely knew where he was, or what he was doing.

Scarcely had five minutes elapsed, when Dubois started up from his seat, crying, "Now that we have taken some refreshment, let us dance."

"I would much rather go home to bed," said my father.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Dubois. "It has begun to rain—the water falls in torrents—let us dance!"

"I am not acquainted with any lady.

"Oh! that is easily arranged. Step up to any one that pleases your fancy, and solicit the honour of her hand," said Dubois.

"Is it also the custom to engage ladies to dance by offering them a pinch of snuff?" enquired my father.

"No—not exactly; you must pay some delicate compliment to the lady. But wherefore should I instruct a man of your experience? *Allons*, Papa Deligny—a little agility—and I will be your *vis-à-vis*."

My father took up his hat, assumed an air of great resolution, took two or three turns round the room, and then stepped up to a lady of fifty, who had come to the ball for the purpose of seeing her nieces dance, without the slightest idea of dancing herself. The good old lady was in an exstasy of joy when my father solicited the favour; she could not refuse; and he led her triumphantly to the place which Dubois had designated in the *quadrille*. When Dubois caught sight of the venerable couple, he cried out at the top of his voice, "Well done,

young people! Be careful—the eyes of all this select company are upon you.”

The orchestra gave a preparatory flourish; and my father, fancying that it was the signal to begin, seized hold of his partner's hands, and bounded forward with her towards Dubois, who caught him by the tail of his coat, and gave him a certain impulse which made the “young couple” perform a *pirouette* that greatly amused the spectators.

The quadrille commenced as soon as order was restored; and Dubois, heated by punch, danced like a madman. My father and his partner lost themselves entirely in the *chaine Anglaise*, and threw the rest into confusion and embarrassment. The girls tittered—the men laughed aloud—and Dubois, highly incensed at my father being made the object of general ridicule, cried out, “Give those rascals a few kicks to keep them quiet.” But instead of assailing the multitude, it was Dubois who was immediately attacked and thrust precipitately out of the room for his turbulence and insolence. My father followed as quickly as he could, leaving his partner to finish the *quadrille* alone; and at about midnight, in the most horrible weather, they found themselves in the middle of the Champs Elysées.

"Where are we?" demanded my father.

"Ah! the villains—the rascals!" cried Dubois; "to fall thirty at a time upon one man! I should nevertheless have thrashed them all the same!"

"I am not sorry we have left them," said my father. "I do not exactly know how the quarrel began: but one thing is certain—that I found myself in the midst of the combatants, and received several blows myself."

"You received some blows?"

"Certainly I did!"

"Return with me, virtuous old man: it never shall be said that the father of my friend was beaten in so disgraceful a manner."

"Where shall we go to?" asked my father.

"We will return to the ball and thrash those scoundrels in their turn," replied Dubois.

"I have had quite enough of it," said my father.

"I obey you because you are the parent of my friend, who has confided you to my care. But, the devil take me—it rains in torrents."

"It does indeed," murmured my father.

"And I have lost my hat in the quarrel," added Dubois.

"Let us make haste and return home," said my father: "do you know the way?"

"Do you think I could possibly lose it?"

"But it is pitch dark."

"Never mind—put the best foot foremost."

"Oh!" ejaculated my father.

"What is the matter?" demanded Dubois.

"I have put my foot into a hole."

"Never mind."

"But I am wet up to the knee."

"It will soon dry," exclaimed Dubois. "Give me your arm—let us support each other."

"Shall we soon be at home?"

"We *must* get somewhere presently."

"You say that this is the finest quarter in Paris." cried my father; "why is it not lighted, then?"

"That is the very reason!" ejaculated Dubois: "it is only the bad neighbourhoods, where the robbers abound, that are lighted."

"And yet this place seems quite deserted."

"Nonsense! you do not see the quantities of people passing, because it is dark."

"I stumble at every step," said my father.

"Because we have lost the pavement," cried Dubois: "let us try and find it."

"O God! how you are dragging me!"

My father and Dubois rolled into a ditch filled with mud and water. Dubois swore like a demon;

and my father imitated his example, anathematizing at the same time the "fashionable quarter" in which his son had taken up his abode. They however succeeded in getting out of the ditch; but their clothes and hands were all covered with filth. Having wandered about for another hour in the Champs Elysées, they at length regained the house in the Allée des Veuves, and retired to their respective beds, Dubois having already intimated his intention of sleeping there that night.

Dubois rose from his bed early on the following morning, and was about to issue forth in search of Deligny, when the servant informed him that Madame Ledoux was desirous of consulting him relative to the prices of her eternal West India products.

"Tell Madame Ledoux," said Dubois, who was in an unusually bad humour, "to go to the devil. I will not even tell her the price of French beans."

This message was duly and literally communicated to Madame Ledoux; and that lady's choler was immediately excited to a most extraordinary pitch. She hastened to the apartments she had lent to Deligny, bounced into the one where the poor old gentleman was seated, and was about to give vent to her wrath, when the said old gentleman cried in a

joyous tone of voice, "Oh! how glad I am, Madame Ledoux, that you are come at last. I have been ringing for Lapierre—but no one has answered; and I am cold and hungry. Pray, is breakfast ready? for as you are my son's housekeeper—"

"I your son's housekeeper!" exclaimed Madame Ledoux. "What the deuce does this mean? Know, Sir, that I am in my own house—that these apartments are mine—and that I lent them to your son—"

"How? is not my son in his own house, then?"

"No, Sir—this house, I repeat, is mine. Your son was desirous of misleading you—of making you believe that he was still rich—and I, in my good-nature, allowed him to use these rooms."

In the meantime Dubois had met me near the house; and we proceeded thither together. We arrived there just at the instant when Madame Ledoux was thus giving vent to her wrath and indignation. My father came towards me as I entered the room where this singular scene was taking place, and said in a severe tone of voice, "Paul, why have you deceived me? why did you tell me that this was your house? and why did you bring me hither? Is it true, that so far from being at your ease, you

have expended all your fortune ? Come—speak, Sir—and this time let me hear the truth.”

“ Yes, my dear father,” cried I, after a momentary embarrassment and hesitation, “ it is true that I have deceived you : but if fortune have been unfavourable to me in my speculations, I have neither dishonoured your name, nor disgraced myself.”

“ No, Sir,” cried Dubois, “ your son is one of the best fellows in existence. An untarnished reputation—an upright character, Papa Deligny, are much better than a thousand a-year. *Parbleu !* if your son had chosen to imitate other young men, he might have had horses, cabriolets, gigs, phaetons, houses, and servants. But how would he have acquired all those luxuries ? By villany and dishonesty ! Now he is poor—and that is a proof of his rectitude.”

“ Sir,” said my father, “ I should advise you to speak after the manner in which you conduct yourself. But I must not reproach either of you. I myself, in one single evening, committed so many extravagances that I cannot blame others. Paul, I shall return to my own little town.”

“ What, father—already ?” cried I.

“ Oh ! immediately—without any delay. Will you accompany me ?”

"My dear father, I have enough left to live upon, and—"

"And you prefer Paris. Well, when you have nothing left, you may return home to me. Order a hackney-coach, and let me be gone."

The vehicle soon arrived, and we proceeded to the *Messageries*. A diligence was fortunately about to leave Paris for Chartres at that moment; and, after having affectionately embraced me, my father stepped into the diligence, which shortly bore him away from the metropolis of France.

"It is to me, my dear friend," said Dubois, "that you are indebted for this speedy departure. Your father amused himself so effectually with me last night, that he thinks it enough for one time. It happens very fortunately too—seeing that Madame Ledoux turns us out of the house."



